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ABSTRACT

The student textbook and the teacher's manual focus on the services, organization, and funding of county government in Georgia. Designed to be used over a three to six week period, the textbook is arranged into six chapters. Chapter one discusses county government, its services, and its structure. Chapter two focuses on county officials and their departments, including the county clerk, sheriff, judge, treasurer, and tax commissioners. The sources of county funds, taxes, federal and state aid, and non-tax revenue are dealt with in chapter three. Chapter four discusses the courts, including case law, the Superior Court System, juries, and courts serving the counties (justice of the peace, juvenile courts). Changing populations is the topic of chapter five. It emphasizes factors influencing population increase and decrease and their ramifications. The final chapter examines current concerns, including financial problems, consolidation of services, and decentralized power. Each chapter concludes with a discussion section which is a series of questions. The teacher's manual contains a suggested time schedule for the 23 lessons. The activities include fact sheets, readings, case studies, simulations, graph interpretation, and numerous opportunities to involve students in investigation of problems and structure of county government. (Author/SH)

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COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN GEORGIA

BY MARY A. HEPBURN

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT • THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN GEORGIA

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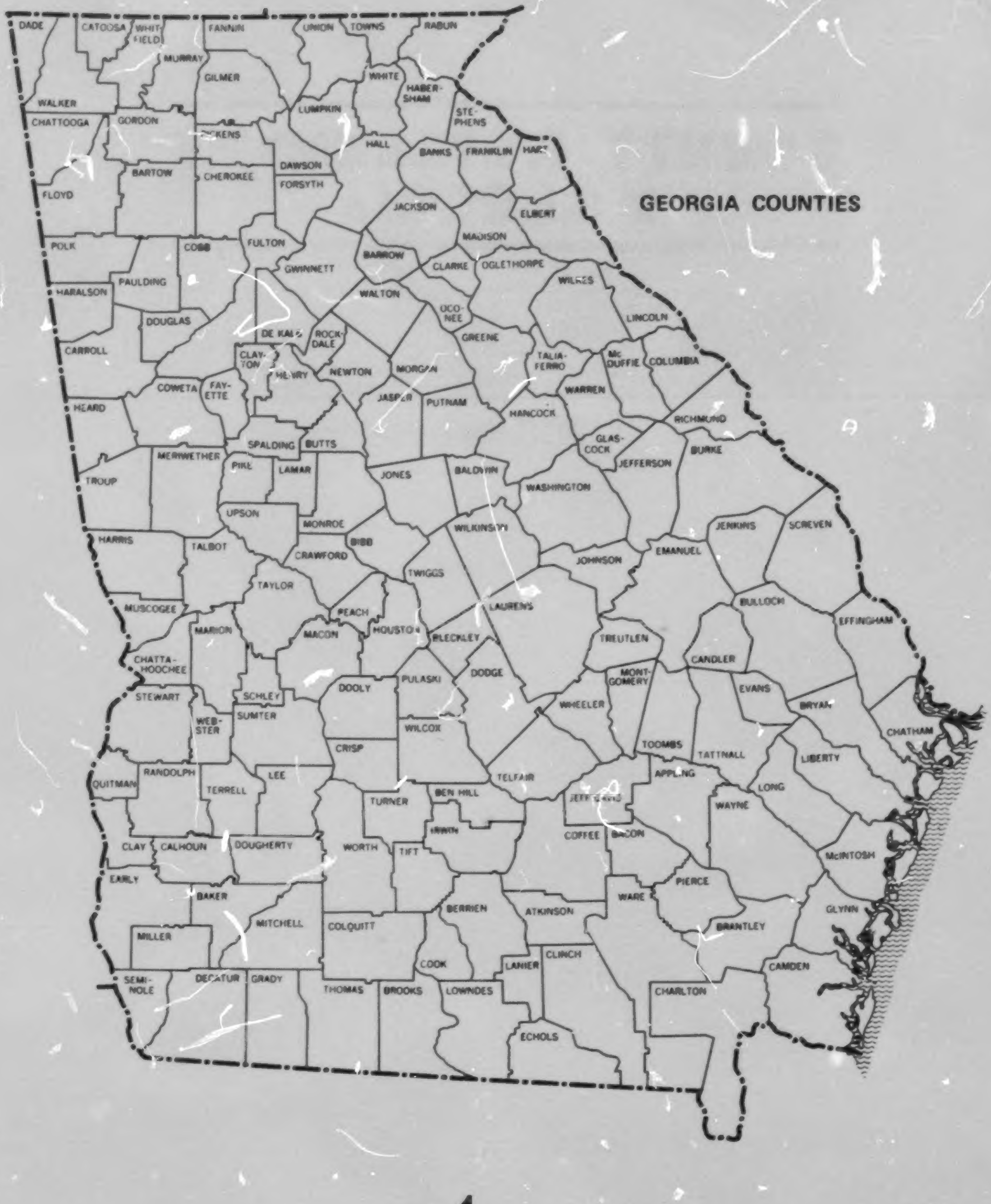

GEORGIA COUNTIES

FOREWORD

County government in Georgia provides many vital services to the citizens of the state. The organization and funding of county government, and the issues associated with county government operations, constitute a major part of public life in Georgia. These topics are examined in this textbook.

Because county government is so important, Georgia students should learn more about it. This textbook was written and published with that aim.

The author is Mary Hepburn, Associate Professor of Social Science Education at the University of Georgia. Several members of the Institute of Government's Governmental Research and Services Division—including Ed Jackson, Devereux Weeks, David Billings, and Jerry Singer—assisted her in gathering additional information.

The Institute is particularly grateful to the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and numerous county officials who also provided information and encouragement. It would not have been possible to complete the book without them.

Ann Blum and Lorena Akioka served as editors for this book. Toni Akin and Ed Sailers provided the typesetting; Miriam Peifer did the proofreading; and Robbie Rowe and Mark Hanger designed the text.

February 1976

Delmer D. Dunn
Director
Institute of Government

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COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN GEORGIA

CHAPTER I

YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Suppose that one morning while you were eating breakfast, you learned from a radio news broadcast that your county government had closed down completely and permanently. What difference would that make in your life?

You could wait and wait for the school bus, but it would not pick you up. The county schools would be closed. All of the county offices in the courthouse would be closed also. There would be no one to issue drivers' licenses or automobile tags and no one to issue marriage licenses. There could be no elections in the county because there would be no one to conduct them. New land purchases would go unrecorded and property deeds, which are the proof of ownership, would no longer be issued.

The roads in your county would no longer be repaired, and ruts and washed-away areas would eventually make the roads dangerous or impassable. Since there would be no repair of county bridges, eventually travel over these bridges would be so hazardous they would have to be closed.

County health facilities would be closed, and all the programs to prevent and cure diseases would be discontinued. If your county runs a hospital, it too would close down. If you live outside the boundaries of a city, you would be without police protection because the sheriff's department and the jail would be closed as well.

In many counties a shutdown of the government would mean that you would be without fire protection, without garbage collection, and, in some cases, without a water system.

How would you feel about living where there is no police protection, no fire protection, no central disease control, no schools, impassable roads, and no means of planning, providing, and governing for all of the people who live there? Perhaps you have not thought before about the importance of county government in your life. Did you realize that you, your family, your neighbors, and friends were so dependent on the services which the county provides? Or how much you would miss these services if they were suddenly unavailable?

Although the activities of county government are all around us, most people notice them only when something goes wrong. Perhaps, because county government is so close to us and receives little of the dramatic television and newspaper coverage which national and state governments receive, few people know much about what their county government does and how these tasks are accomplished. For example, do you know:

- exactly what counties are?
- what kinds of services counties provide?
- how counties began and developed in Georgia?
- how most county governments in Georgia are organized?

WHAT ARE COUNTIES?

Counties are basic geographic and political subdivisions of the state. Found in all states of the United States except Rhode Island and Connecticut, county government is particularly important in the Southeast.

Created by state government, counties are subject to the controls of the state constitution and state legislature. The powers, offices, and finances of each county are determined by amendments added to the state constitution or by laws passed by the state legislature. Since much of this state regulation deals with each county on an individual basis, the powers and officials vary from county to county. However, several areas of service activities are common to the counties.

In Georgia, the counties usually serve as a local unit or "arm" of the state government, and provide state-required and state-funded services to the county population. However, Georgia's counties also have functions which are distinct and separate from those of state government. These serve otherwise unprovided or special needs of the local people.

Seven Categories of Service

While differing in number and types from county to county in Georgia, services can be grouped into seven general categories. Your county probably provides some services in each one.

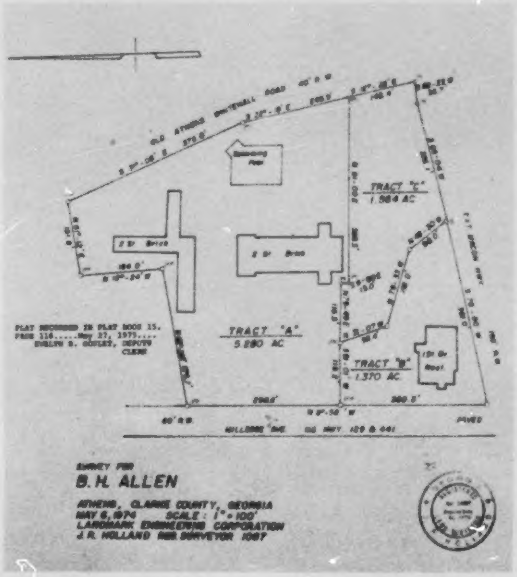
1. Public Works. At one time in Georgia, the main concern of county governments was to build and keep up the roads, highways, and bridges in the county and to raise enough money to pay for these "public works." Later, public works activities increased to involve developing and maintaining systems of storm sewers and drainage ditches. All of this work has required the purchase, management, and maintenance of the necessary equipment, buildings, and grounds as well as the hiring of needed workers. Continuing increases in needs and demands of the citizens have further expanded public works. For example, traffic signals are now needed at many county road intersections because of increased traffic on these roads.

Also, to meet the needs and demands of growing populations, garbage collection and disposal is being provided in heavily populated areas outside of cities by the county government. For instance, DeKalb County collects and disposes of garbage for large areas of that county. Bibb County also provides garbage collection service, but for a smaller area. Such public works may require the county to purchase and maintain a fleet of garbage trucks and employ a staff of sanitation engineers and collectors. On the other hand, the county may contract with a private garbage collection firm to carry out the operation for a set payment. Because of increased needs for garbage disposal services, most of the counties in Georgia now operate sanitary landfills where garbage can be brought and dumped. Paper, cans, and bottles may be recycled for other purposes by a team of county sanitation workers.

2. Public Safety. The county provides the core of its law enforcement services through the sheriff's department. This department is responsible for maintaining a jail, carrying out court orders, and establishing a civil defense program, as well as for protecting life and property in the county. Some counties also have a separate county police department that aids in the apprehension of criminals, traffic control, and general law enforcement. Clarke and DeKalb Counties are examples of more populated counties which have established a county police force.

Fire protection, traditionally a city service, is provided directly by a few counties such as DeKalb. In other counties, such as Camden, county funds are paid to city fire departments for answering county calls. Some—Walton County, for example—provide financial support for a volunteer fire department.

3. Development. The development activities of counties are those which concern the use of governmental resources and controls to encourage planned, orderly, healthful, attractive development of land and roads. For example, to plan for the economic development of the area and the recreational needs of its people, county governments pass and enforce zoning ordinances. These set aside certain sections of the county land area for specific types of development—residential, commercial, or industrial. Such planning and regulation can prevent the construction of factories in shopping areas and the building of department stores or used car lots in residential areas. County governments also set aside lands for parks and public facilities and develop them with public funds.


TRACT "C"
1.564 AC
TRACT "A"
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TRACT "B"
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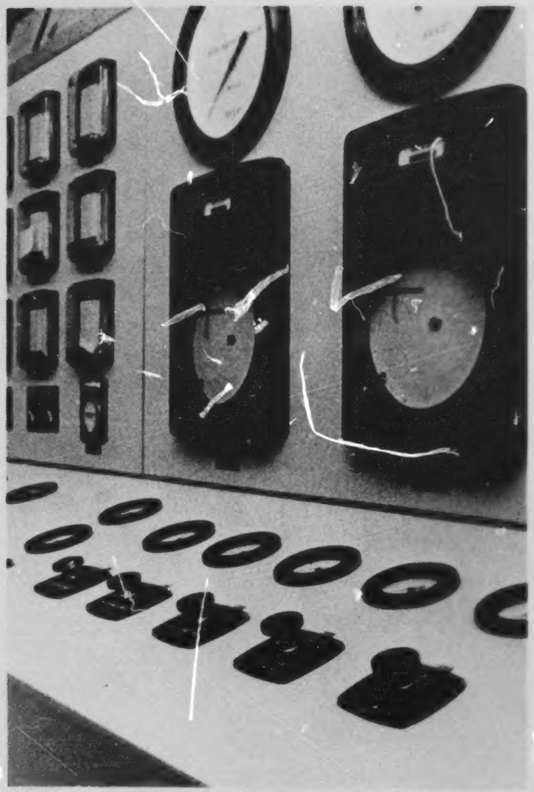
SURVEY FOR
B. H. ALLEN
ATHENS, CLARKE COUNTY, GEORGIA
MAY 6, 1974 SCALE: 1" = 100'
LANDMARK ENGINEERING CORPORATION
J.R. HOLLAND REG. SURVEYOR 1067

A PLAT or official map showing the physical aspects of a piece of property, including size, boundaries, and location of buildings.

4. Public Utilities. Counties commonly promote and regulate certain business enterprises which provide services essential to the people, such as gas companies, electric companies, transportation systems, water works, and sewerage systems.

The Crisp County Power Commission is an example of how a county regulates



Modern facilities maintained by some counties to monitor water quality and amount of water usage.

utilities. The Commission was set up as an arm of the county government to look out for the interests of its people regarding power rates and services. In some cases the county may actually own and operate the public utility.

In addition, many counties have developed countywide water systems. For example, Cobb County runs a complete water system including a water pollution abatement program and sewerage system. Gwinnett County also has a large water system and is planning to expand it to include a sewer and wastewater treatment program and to tie it into plans for a countywide fire protection program as well.

Pickens, Decatur, and Fulton Counties are examples of counties which own and run an airport. Some other counties–such as Dougherty, Spalding, and Houston–jointly own and maintain an airport with the major municipality in the county (Albany in Dougherty, Griffin in Spalding, and Perry in Houston).

5. Public Health and General Welfare. A major county service is the prevention and control of communicable disease by vaccinations, quarantines, and diagnosing services, such as x-ray clinics for tuberculosis detection. Years ago most counties held health clinics for a few days each month to give free vaccinations against communicable diseases. Today, numerous counties maintain fulltime public health clinics to provide vaccinations, tests for venereal diseases, blood tests, x-rays, eye tests, and other examinations and diagnoses. In addition, school hygiene programs test vision and hearing and teach dental hygiene.

County health services may also include mental health programs, crippled children's services, and ambulance service for county residents. (For instance, Habersham, Forsyth, Jackson and most other counties operate ambulance services.) Some counties operate a hospital. A prime example is Grady Memorial Hospital, which is operated by Fulton and DeKalb Counties to serve that metropolitan area. A number of counties, like Liberty County, have mosquito control programs to reduce the health hazard from these insects. County health services generally are tied to larger state-planned programs which utilize, where possible, federal support to meet local needs.

A number of county government activities provide for the general welfare of its citizens. The building and maintenance of public schools, public libraries, parks, and recreation areas are in this category. Counties also offer agricultural advisory and assistance programs, many of which are part of state-funded and regulated agricultural aid programs.

6. Public Assistance. This category of service includes the special provision of publicly financed aid to the poor, the aged, the blind, the disabled, the unemployed, and the children of the county. Many assistance programs are federally and/or state planned

and funded services which are administered through the county so that people are reached through smaller units of government. For example, the county department of family and children services carries out a number of federal-state and state programs such as counseling and financial aid.

7. General Governmental Services. This broad category of service includes the important records-keeping and elections function of county government. Some of these services are carried out specifically for the state government, and others are entirely a county operation. The county issues and keeps records of important documents such as deeds, marriage licenses, permits for firearms, and automobile registration (for the state). Wills are recorded and verified, and deaths and all property transactions are recorded. Complete court and criminal records for the county are also kept.

The county also is responsible for announcing (by publication) coming elections, arranging for and conducting the elections, and keeping records of the local results of all state, national, and county elections.

These are only brief descriptions of the seven categories of county government services. As you study more about how the county operates, who its officials are, and the problems and issues that arise, you will obtain a clearer and more detailed picture of county services.

In some Georgia counties, land deeds are kept on microfilm in the Clerk of Superior Court's office.

TABLE I

Functions Provided by County Governments in the United States

	All Counties		Metro		Nonmetro	
	No.	% of total	No.	% of total	No.	% of total
Total, all counties responding to questionnaire	1,026	100	150	100	876	100
Function						
Police protection	836	82	117	78	719	82
Fire protection	453	44	47	31	406	46
Coroner's office	816	80	130	87	686	78
Jails and detention homes	874	85	145	97	729	83
Probation and parole service	607	59	119	79	488	56
General assistance public welfare	805	79	114	76	691	79
Medical assistance	693	68	105	70	588	67
Crippled children	507	49	78	52	420	49
Elementary schools	583	57	56	37	527	60
Secondary schools	552	54	58	39	494	56
Special education programs	415	40	57	38	358	41
Junior colleges	165	16	40	27	125	14
Four-year colleges	35	3	13	9	22	3
Libraries	575	56	86	57	489	56
Roads and highways	780	76	117	78	663	76
Parking	93	9	17	11	76	9
Mass transit	14	1	7	5	7	1
Ports and harbors	38	4	13	9	25	3
Airports	332	32	36	24	296	34
Sewers and sewage disposal	263	26	50	33	213	24
Refuse and garbage collection	234	23	31	21	203	23
Solid waste disposal	298	29	55	37	243	28
Public health	772	75	120	80	652	74
Mental health	615	60	104	69	511	58
Air pollution	139	14	55	37	84	10
Water pollution	122	12	45	30	77	9
Mosquito abatement	166	16	56	37	110	13
Animal control	333	33	75	51	258	30

EIGHT COUNTIES AND HOW THEY GREW

Georgia's first Constitution in 1777 provided for eight counties. Unlike the other twelve original states, Georgia did not have a long experience of colonial self-government and had not developed a system of local government. So, when the Georgia State Legislature created the county subdivisions, it regulated them very closely by dealing with each county separately. It allowed them very little authority for managing their own affairs. Evidence of this close regulation exists today in the accumulation of numerous laws defining the powers and offices of each Georgia county passed by the State Legislature over the years.

The eight original counties were set up to serve as the districts from which members of the General Assembly (the State Legislature) were to be elected. As local units of the state government, the counties were responsible for keeping local records, probating (proving) wills, and establishing a system of justice and law enforcement. This required setting up a

	All Counties		Metro		Nonmetro	
	No.	% of total	No.	% of total	No.	% of total
Hospitals	401	39	61	41	340	39
Ambulance service	387	38	34	23	353	40
Parks and recreation	387	38	83	55	304	35
Flood and drainage control	231	23	51	34	180	21
Irrigation	64	6	5	3	59	7
Soil conservation	418	41	59	39	359	41
Fish and game	153	15	12	8	141	16
Public housing	135	13	28	19	107	12
Urban renewal	52	5	13	9	39	5
Industrial development	169	17	32	21	137	16
Water supply	207	20	31	21	176	20
Power supply	132	13	3	2	129	15
Tax assessment and collection	853	83	125	83	728	83
Personnel services	196	19	52	35	144	16
Central purchasing	180	18	60	40	120	14
Data processing	130	13	65	43	65	7
Courts	775	76	130	87	645	74
Prosecution	672	66	120	80	552	63
Public defender	320	31	77	51	243	28
Planning	536	52	114	76	422	48
Zoning	439	43	82	55	357	41
Code enforcement	219	21	63	42	156	18
Subdivision control	308	30	77	51	231	26
Auditoriums	170	17	26	17	144	16
Museums	134	13	25	17	109	12
Cemeteries	218	21	24	15	194	22
Veteran's affairs	500	49	86	57	414	47
Cultural affairs	45	4	11	7	34	4
Agricultural extension services	764	75	112	75	652	74
Livestock inspection	201	20	34	23	167	19

Source: *Profile of County Government,* January 1972, Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office).

court, building a courthouse, and constructing a jail. Within their own areas, the county governments built and maintained rural roads and bridges, and built and provided the necessary equipment for public schools.

The County Seat

The county courthouse and the jail were built in a town located somewhere in the center of each county. This town was called the *county seat*. The counties were small enough so that anyone living in the county was no more than ten to fifteen miles from the county seat. Therefore, any citizen could make the roundtrip to the courthouse by horse and buggy in one day. In Georgia, the county seat not only served as the center for rural political activities, but the courthouse and vicinity became a gathering place and a center for business transactions and social meetings as well. (Find your county and county seat on Map 1.)

Early County Management

At first, the State Legislature set up an "inferior county court" to manage the affairs of each county. The judges of these courts were appointed by the State Legislature. They served as a court of law to hear the legal cases in each county. Also, they were in charge of:

- maintaining roads and bridges,
- providing for a county police patrol,
- levying taxes,
- keeping records and accounts of the county,
- regulating and licensing peddlers,
- caring for the poor,
- issuing quarantines and other health regulations, and
- appointing other county officers.

When the inferior county courts were discontinued in 1852, many of their managing powers were passed to the newly-created, elective county officials who were to be known as "ordinaries" (now called judges of the probate courts). In 1868, a new State Constitution made clear what the powers and duties of the office of the ordinary were as **county administrator**. However, that constitution also provided the State Legislature with the power to create, as needed, "boards of county commissioners." Eventually these boards of commissioners became the administrators of county government throughout Georgia.

The first board of county commissioners was created by the State Legislature in 1869 when it gave a three-man board the power to manage the affairs of Harris County. Since that time, the legislature has enacted many different local laws which have set up governing boards for specific counties. Most of the boards were to be elected and to have three members who each held a four-year term. Today, Georgia has only two remaining counties —Towns and Union— where a board of commissioners has not replaced the single management of county affairs by the judge of the probate court.

The Counties Multiply

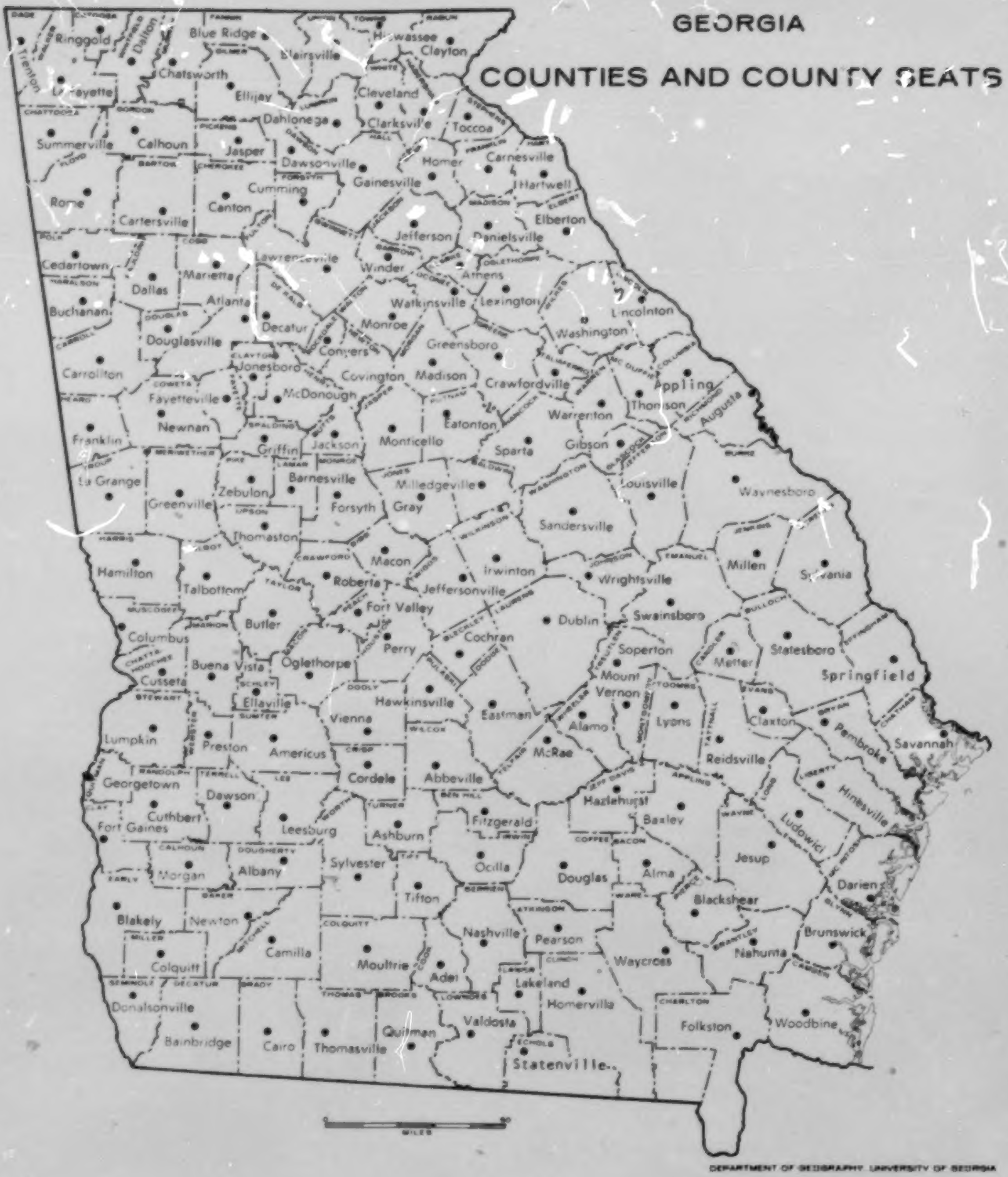
The original eight counties were located along the Atlantic coast and along the South Carolina border. (Find the counties marked "1777" on Map 2.) As Georgia's population grew and moved west and north into other areas of the state, the number of counties grew—to 49 by 1820, to 92 by 1840, and to 132 by 1862.

The Georgia Constitution of 1877 limited the number of possible counties to 137. However, constitutional amendments passed since that time have provided for twenty-nine additional counties. In 1932 two adjacent counties—Milton and Campbell—were merged into Fulton County. Today, the 4½ million residents of Georgia live in 159 counties which cover 58,876 square miles.

Georgia now has more counties than any other state in the United States except Texas. Population in Georgia's counties ranges from 607,592 in Fulton County, which has the most people, to 1,924 in Echols County, which is the least populated. County land areas range from 965 square miles in Burke County to 114 square miles in Clarke County.

As you can see, Georgia's population is not very evenly distributed over the counties. Because some counties have large cities, they are heavily populated. Other counties are mostly farm land and are sparsely populated. Yet these less populated counties must try to provide, with limited taxes, the many services—including road maintenance over many square miles—which the other counties provide.

MAP 1

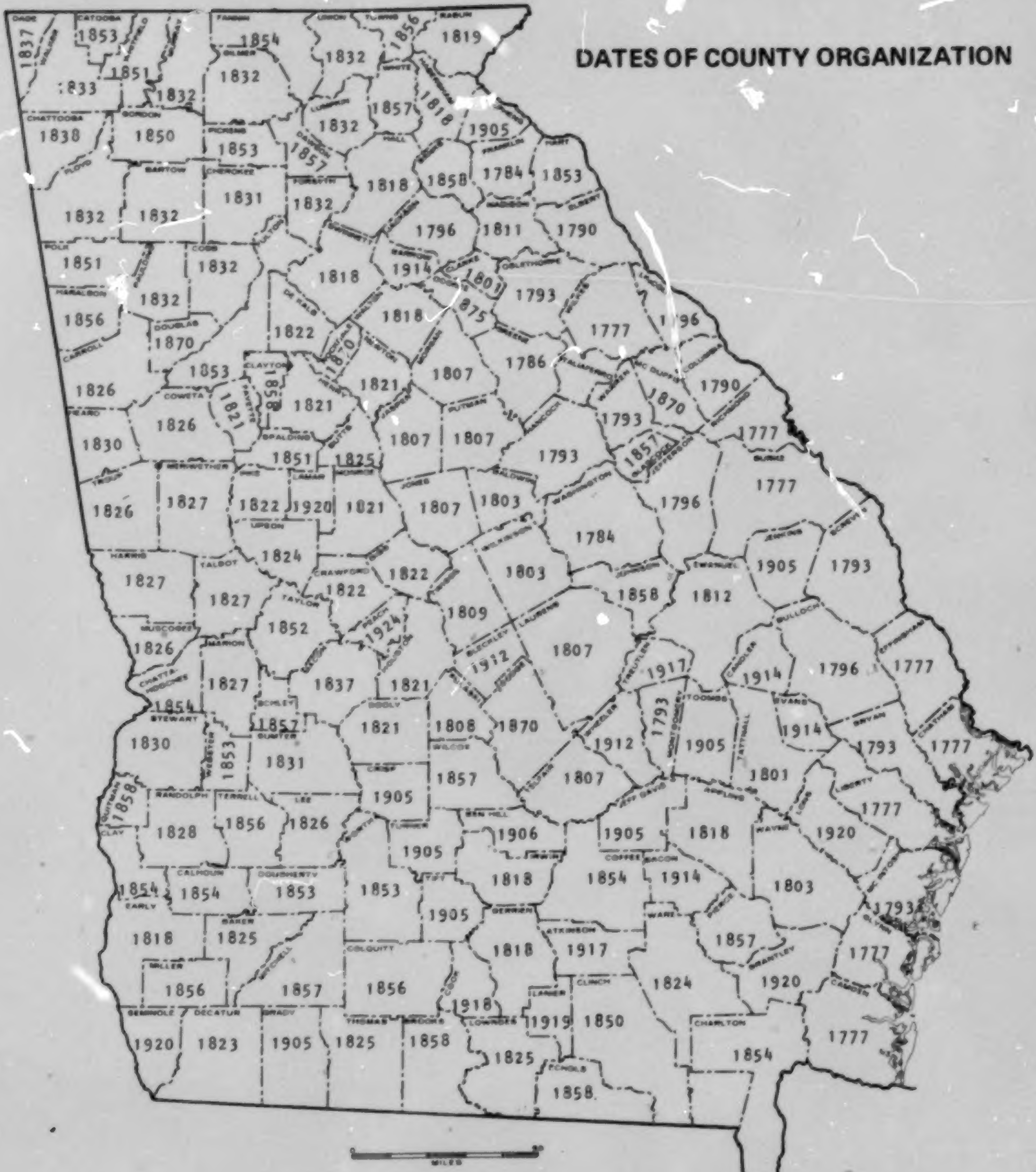


GEORGIA

COUNTIES AND COUNTY SEATS

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

MAP 2



DATES OF COUNTY ORGANIZATION

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

TABLE 2

A Comparison of the Two States with the Most Counties

	Number of Counties	Square Miles	Number of People
Texas	254	267,339	10,989,000
Georgia	159	58,274	4,589,575

What is the average number of square miles per county in Texas? In Georgia?

What is the average number of people per county in Texas? In Georgia?

Some Georgia political leaders suggest that the state has too many counties and that the counties should be consolidated. Consolidation would merge two or more counties into a single county in an effort to cut costs and provide more efficient governmental services.

There has been considerable controversy over proposals to reform county government. Some people who live in smaller counties don't want to lose their separate county courthouse and county name. They also feel that "bigger is not necessarily better" in county government. Some county officials oppose any reform that might change or eliminate their jobs.

On the other hand, those who favor consolidation hope it will reduce costs and provide relief from property taxes. Some residents of urban and suburban areas are seeking more efficient services through some type of county government reform. Some state officials are concerned about the duplication of organization and expenditures. However, many Georgians know nothing about this issue even though their personal and community interests are at stake.

We will return to the controversy over county consolidation in the last chapter of this book, which deals with current issues in county government. However, before looking into these important issues, you will need more information about county government—what it does, who does it, and how it affects you.

County-City Development

In Georgia, the growth of counties and the development of their governments have been greatly influenced by the growth of cities. Cities are also important subdivisions of the state. Most Georgia cities have developed within a single county. However, there are some cities—both large and small—which have developed across several counties. For example, the densely populated Atlanta metropolitan area has grown beyond Fulton County into DeKalb, Clayton, and Cobb Counties. On the other hand, some small towns like Barwick in south Georgia (in Brooks and Thomas Counties) and Allentown in central Georgia (in Bleckley, Laurens, Twiggs, and Wilkinson Counties) have also grown across county lines. In many cases, the development of a county has been tied to the growth and development of a specific city.

While the overlap of county and city governments sometimes lead to cooperatively shared or consolidated operations, the two governments sometimes operate completely separately. Yet, it is difficult to say exactly which services will be provided by the city and which by the county because of variations in the specific powers of these local governments throughout the state. Usually the city is responsible for street maintenance, garbage collection, law enforcement, fire protection, and other major services within its boundaries.

In crowded urban areas, county governments have had to expand their services to meet the needs of their large populations. Some urban and suburban counties have had to provide services similar to those normally provided by cities—such as garbage collection, fire protection, and extensive police protection. In other cases, especially when all of a major city is in the county, the county has provided these additional services jointly with the city government.

State and Federal Impetus for Growth

The expansion of county government functions has also been promoted by an increase in the programs set up and funded by the state government to be carried out at the county level. For example, the state contributes funds for county road building and for development of recreation areas. Usually state funding is accompanied by state regulations concerning the use of the funds.

The federal government also channels financial support into the counties. Certain federal programs allocate funds to the state to help provide services or assistance for its people. The state then puts the program into effect through the counties. Some welfare assistance programs to help the poor and the aged are federally supported services. The county agent's advice and assistance to farmers, gardeners, and homemakers is another example.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

In Georgia the 159 counties notably lack uniformity. The number of offices and the types of elected and appointed officials vary from county to county, and so do the number and extent of the services which counties provide. Nevertheless, there are certain basic services which are provided by all counties, and there are some generalizations which can be made about the structure of the county governments.

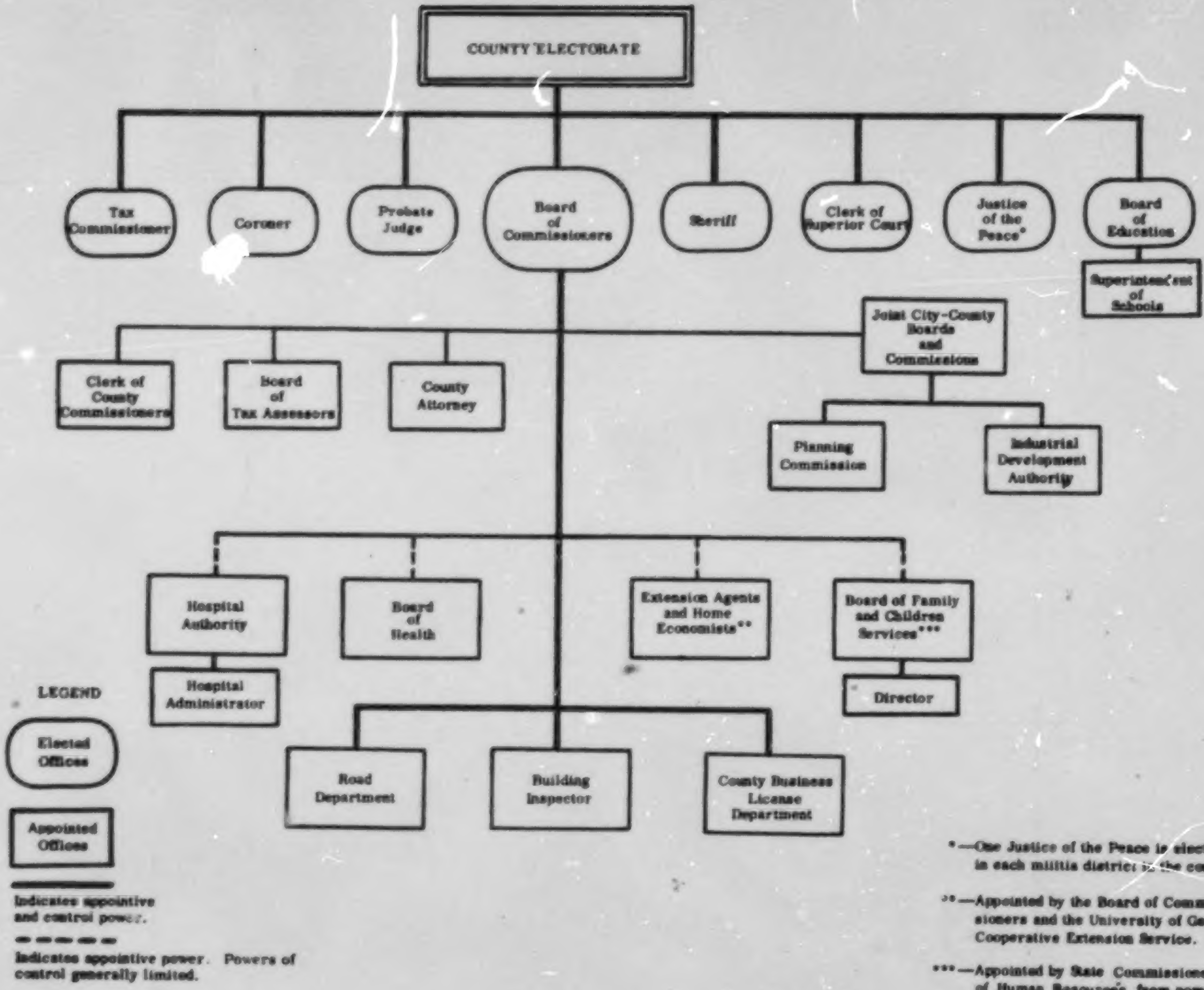
The overwhelming majority of Georgia's counties are "small" counties with a population under 25,000. These counties generally have fewer officials and a less complex governmental structure.

Twenty-three percent (or thirty-seven) of the counties have a population over 100,000. The more populated counties provide more services, have more officials, and generally have a more complex organizational structure.

The charts on the next two pages present general features of the organization of smaller and larger county governments. In the smaller counties, the commissioners carry out many of the details of the day-to-day management of the government, including hiring new employees, purchasing materials and supplies, and directing a variety of county operations. In the larger counties, a county manager or a county administrator, who is appointed by the commissioners, may be responsible for the daily decisions about the management of the government.

Look over these two charts of typical county government offices and organizations carefully. What other differences do you see between the smaller and larger counties? Remember that a specific county's structure may not be exactly like either of these two charts. To find out just what departments, boards, and officials are in your county government, contact your county clerk or a county commissioner at the county courthouse. Draw a chart which shows the structure of the government in your county. Be sure your chart includes all of the elected and major appointed officials and shows their relationship to each other and to the county voters.

SMALL COUNTY GOVERNMENT

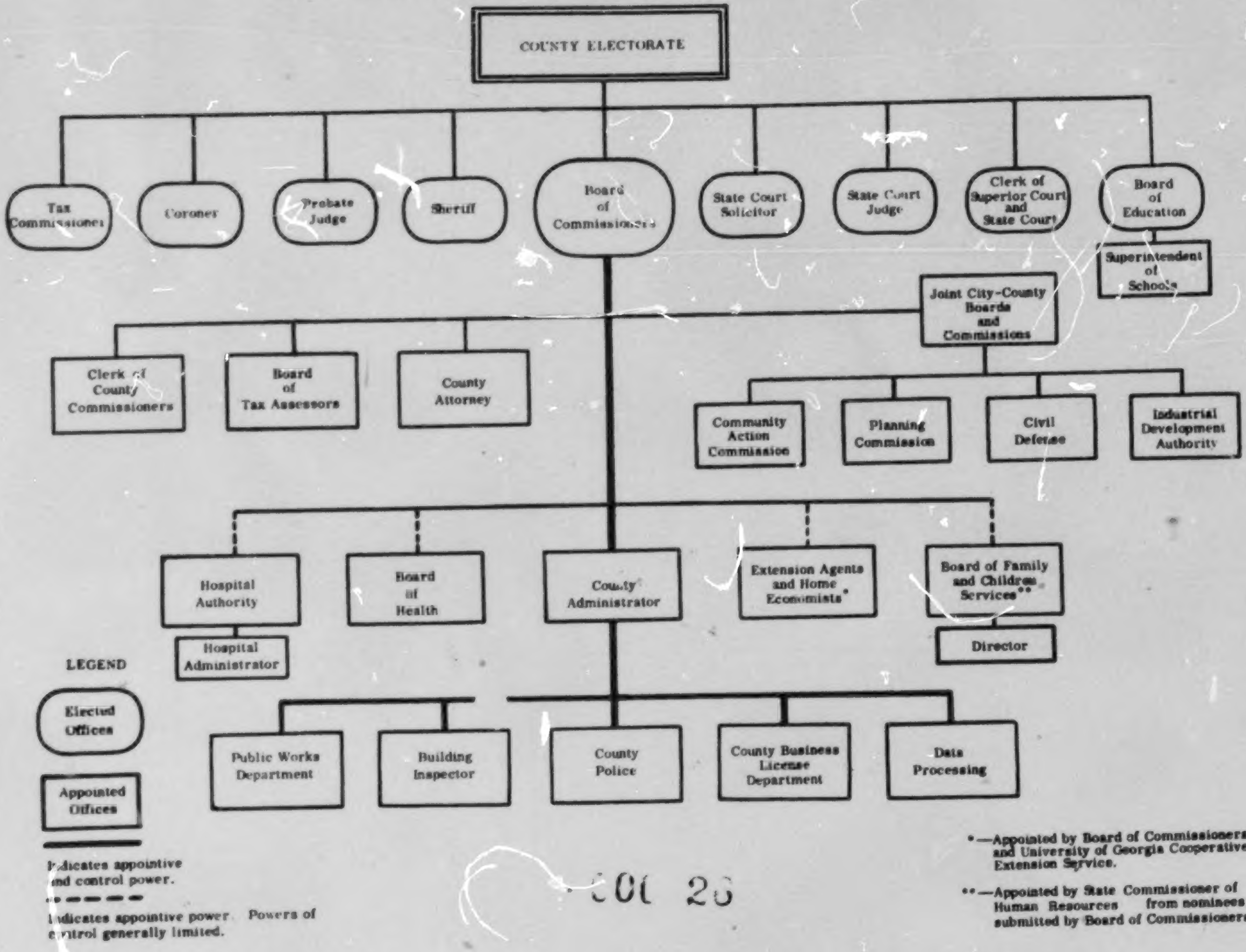

COUNTY ELECTORATE
Tax Commissioner
Coroner
Probate Judge
Board of Commissioners
Sheriff
Clerk of Superior Court
Justice of the Peace*
Board of Education
Superintendent of Schools
Joint City-County Boards and Commissions
Clerk of County Commissioners
Board of Tax Assessors
County Attorney
Planning Commission
Industrial Development Authority
Hospital Authority
Hospital Administrator
Board of Health
Extension Agents and Home Economists**
Board of Family and Children Services***
Director
Road Department
Building Inspector
County Business License Department
LEGEND
Elected Offices
Appointed Offices
Indicates appointive and control power.
Indicates appointive power. Powers of control generally limited.

* —One Justice of the Peace is elected in each militia district in the county.

** —Appointed by the Board of Commissioners and the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service.

*** —Appointed by State Commissioner of Human Resources from nominees submitted by Board of Commissioners.

LARGE COUNTY GOVERNMENT


COUNTY ELECTORATE
Tax Commissioner
Coroner
Probate Judge
Sheriff
Board of Commissioners
State Court Solicitor
State Court Judge
Clerk of Superior Court and State Court
Board of Education
Superintendent of Schools
Joint City-County Boards and Commissions
Clerk of County Commissioners
Board of Tax Assessors
County Attorney
Community Action Commission
Planning Commission
Civil Defense
Industrial Development Authority
Hospital Authority
Hospital Administrator
Board of Health
County Administrator
Extension Agents and Home Economists*
Board of Family and Children Services**
Director
Public Works Department
Building Inspector
County Police
County Business License Department
Data Processing
LEGEND
Elected Offices
Appointed Offices
Indicates appointive and control power.
Indicates appointive power. Powers of control generally limited.

* —Appointed by Board of Commissioners and University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service.

** —Appointed by State Commissioner of Human Resources from nominees submitted by Board of Commissioners.

DISCUSSION

1. Since you got up this morning, how many county services have you used or observed?
2. Of the seven categories of county services described in this chapter, which ones do you feel are the most important? Explain.
3. County government and city government services sometimes overlap. And there are differences from county to county. To obtain information about specific services offered by your county government, look in your phone book under the name of your county to find a listing of county offices. From this listing, determine what functions are performed by the county and list them on paper.
4. Look in the phone book under the name of the city in which you live (or the nearest city) for a listing of city government offices. From this listing, figure out what functions are performed by this city. List these and compare them to the county list. Which functions overlap? Which ones are solely county functions? Which are city-provided? Are there any signs of cooperative services?
5. Obtain a large map of your county from the Highway Division of the Transportation Department of the State of Georgia (2 Capitol Square, Atlanta, Georgia 30301). Place the map on a bulletin board or mount it on a large piece of cardboard. Place colored markers on the map to show the sources of county government services (e.g., the courthouse, sanitary landfill, water treatment plant, public works garage, county health office, etc.) Also indicate your school on the map.
6. Look at the table on pages 6 and 7, and answer the following questions:
    a) List the top ten functions (performed by the largest numbers of counties).
    b) Into which of the seven categories of service do each of these top ten functions fall?
    c) Which functions are carried out by a majority (51% or more) of the counties which are not metropolitan areas? List these.
    d) Which functions are carried out by a majority (51% or more) of the metropolitan counties? List these and compare to the non-metro counties. What do you find? What explanations can you give?
7. What might happen if any one of the seven areas of county services were neglected or eliminated in your county? Consider the loss of each area.
8. Are there any other services, including regulations, which are not discussed in this chapter which you think the county might effectively provide?
9. Can you pick out the eight original counties on Map 2? In which directions did Georgia grow?
10. Look over the map on page 10. In what year was your county organized? Was it one of the original counties or was it created from other counties?
11. Why were counties set up in the first place?
12. In 1777, what kinds of services could a county provide more effectively than the state? Why? And today, in the 1970s, what kinds of services can a county better provide than the state government?
13. What factors might account for the great growth in the number of counties in Georgia?
14. Compare your own organization chart of your county with the large county and small county organization charts. Which is closest to your county's organization? Explain why.

CHAPTER 2

OFFICIALS AND THEIR DEPARTMENTS

The great variety of services provided by the county are made available to you through the people who fill the elected and appointed offices of the county's government. These may include:

- judge of the probate court,
- tax commissioner (or tax receiver and tax collector),
- county treasurer,
- clerk of superior court,
- sheriff,
- coroner,
- surveyor,
- public school officials,
- county clerk,
- board of tax assessors.

The chief county governing body is the elected board of county commissioners.

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

In Georgia county government we do not find the clear separation of legislative and executive powers evident in the state and federal governments. County commissioners have a combination of **legislative powers** (making the laws) and **executive powers** (carrying out the laws). As legislators, they decide the general directions (**policies**) of county programs and agencies. As executives, they appoint officials to carry out or implement some of these policies, and as day-to-day administrators, they carry out some themselves.

The board of commissioners, or, in some cases, the single governing commissioner, determines the county's needs, and then, within the powers allowed them by the state, they act to meet these needs by passing **ordinances and resolutions.** County **ordinances** are local laws passed by the commissioners to deal with specific problems, such as regulating traffic, limiting noise, requiring business licenses, etc. Resolutions are more general directives issued by the commissioners, which tend to be less formal. Usually they express the commissioners' position on a current or temporary matter. Examples are resolutions seeking or accepting funding aid from state or federal government, encouraging wise energy use in the county, indicating cooperation in an area-wide promotion of tourism, etc.

Empowered by the state, the county commissioners make daily administrative and policy decisions about the following county government activities:

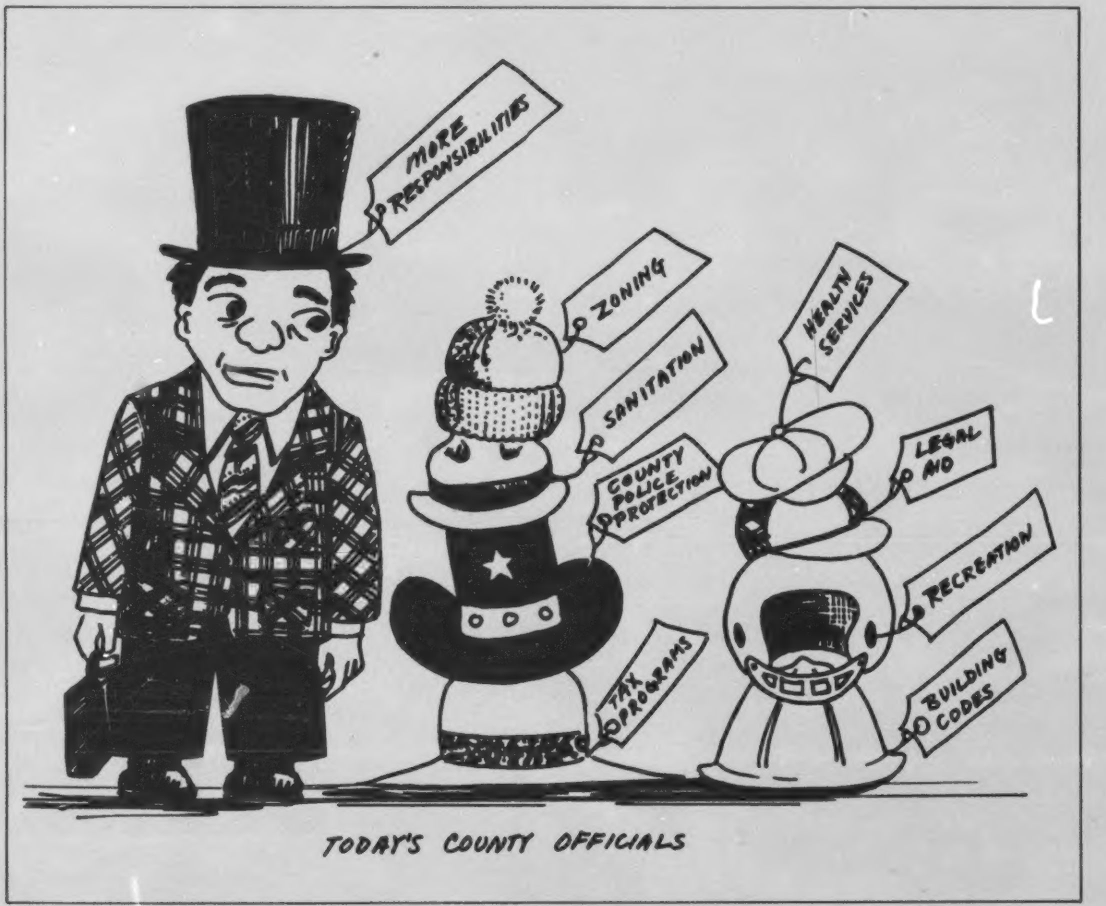
- building and maintaining roads and bridges, and sometimes airports.
- appointing and directing the county officials legally under their jurisdiction.
- setting and collecting county taxes within the limits set by the state.
- providing for law enforcement and correctional facilities.
- officially recording births, marriages, and property ownership in the county.
- providing for the protection of the health and welfare of county residents.
- planning and providing for parks, playgrounds, and other recreational facilities.
- licensing and taxing traveling salesmen within the county.
- regulating (along with state and federal governments) the manufacture, transportation, possession, and sale of alcoholic beverage inside the county limits.
- providing for public libraries and preserving of historical material.
- building and maintaining drainage systems.
- preparing, reviewing, and passing on the annual county budget.

- using and caring for county property.
- other special functions provided by Georgia laws passed for specific counties.
- requesting assistance from the governor in handling emergencies, civil disorder.

It should be remembered that the powers and related duties of the commissioners vary from county to county. Their specific powers are limited by state law and by the powers granted to other elected officials in the county. The commissioners must also consider the resource limitations and current needs in their counties. Therefore, in most counties only *some* of the services listed above are planned and provided for the people of the county by the commissioners.

Many county programs, such as those concerning public works and public services, apply only to those county areas which are not under a city government. Other services, such as health, welfare, public recordkeeping, and recreation, are provided for all who live within the county limits.

Commissioners may be part-time or fulltime employees of the county, depending on needs and legal provisions. In many counties they are part-time officials who carry out their official county duties in addition to their regular work as businessmen, farmers, lawyers, or whatever.



Drawing by Robbie Rowe; based on an idea from the Georgia County Government Magazine, *Feb. 1974.*

IN THE NEWS

Counties Tend Toward Larger Boards

Several times each year GEORGIA COUNTY GOVERNMENT Magazine will record changes in the size of county boards of commissioners. Local government reorganization is a continuing, evolving process which in recent years has tended strongly toward larger boards.

The more popular trends are evident from the table below. Although there are still 27 counties with sole commissioners, 123 now have three, four or five commissioners. These three- to five-member boards govern 58.36% of the state's population.

Note how most counties have avoided possible voting stalemates in the commission meeting by electing an odd number of commissioners.

The five-member board is most popular, with three-member organization running a close second. It may be significant that about 82% of the entire population is served by boards of from three to seven members.

The 27 counties having single commissioners account for only 9.2% of the state's population, but they are not all small counties. Carroll County has a population of about 50,000; Rockdale has nearly 25,000 and Cherokee County which is soon to abandon its sole commissioner type government has grown to 35,000 population under a sole commissioner.

GEORGIA COUNTY GOVERNMENT MAGAZINE, October 1975, p. 44.

NUMBER OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ON BOARDS	NUMBER OF COUNTIES WITH THIS SIZE BOARD	TOTAL POPULATION OF COUNTIES HAVING THIS SIZE BOARD	PERCENT OF TOTAL STATE POPULATION
1	27	422,145	9.2%
3	55	749,958	16.31%
4	1	15,814	.34%
5	67	1,913,959	41.71%
6	3	68,664	1.5%
7	3	1,029,376	22.42%
8	1	34,515	.75%
9	1	187,767	4.1%
10	1	167,377	3.64%
TOTAL	159	4,589,575	99.97%

INTERVIEW

Talking With A County Commissioner

I visited Tom Callaway in his office located in the busy surroundings of his automobile dealership in downtown Decatur. In 1973 Mr. Callaway was one of six part-time commissioners in DeKalb County. (That county also elects a full-time commissioner who serves as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners.)

Tom Callaway

Tom Callaway had been a DeKalb County commissioner for twelve years, and at the time of this interview he was president of the Association County Commissioners of Georgia. When I asked him how he happened to become involved in county government, he explained that it was a natural development from his activities as a business leader for many years. He had served as president of the local and the state organizations of automobile dealers, and later had been president of the Chamber of Commerce of Georgia. Moving from business leadership to local political leadership seemed an easy thing to him.

"There was a vacancy on the Commission, and someone asked me to run, so I did. . . . I think a businessman has to be involved, and if he is able to do these things, he should do them."

I asked Mr. Callaway to describe some of the responsibilities of the Board of Commissioners in his county. He pointed out that populous DeKalb County is much like a big city because it requires many of the services of a city.

"We make many of the same kinds of decisions that a board of aldermen would make in a city. We provide funds for street maintenance, land use, fire protection, police protection, and zoning."

He noted that many current problems in the country relate to the quality of the environment. "We are greatly involved these days with problems of ecology—clean air, clean water, the sanitary landfill, and so forth."

Concerning the way in which county commissioners must make important decisions, Callaway commented, "We are a policymaking body, and, of course, there are pressures on us. But I never make a decision in advance of a hearing. I won't be pressured in advance."

He said that there seemed to be more pressure exerted on him to limit or halt action by county government than there was pressure which would support or further action by the county.

When I asked him what he considered to be *the most* serious problem confronting county government in Georgia today, he responded quickly. "We have an archaic tax structure. The ad valorem property tax is out of date."

He proposed a combination of increased sales and income taxes throughout the state as the best solution to providing funds for county governmental operations.

We talked about the increasing needs of the growing Atlanta-metropolitan area in which DeKalb County is located. Mr. Callaway said that he was convinced that many of the needed services can be provided by the county working jointly with the city. He suggested that changes were needed in county governmental powers. However, he felt that *gradual* changes could produce the greater effectiveness needed at the county level of government.

Interview: June 13, 1973

LAW

Example of a Local Law

FAYETTE COUNTY—SHERIFF—AUTOMOBILE PROVISIONS CHANGED

No. 565 (House Bill No. 818)

An Act to amend an Act placing the sheriff of Fayette County upon an annual salary, approved March 24, 1965 (Ga. L. 1965, p. 2585), as amended, so as to change certain of the provisions relative to the sheriff's automobiles; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Georgia:

Section 1. An Act placing the sheriff of Fayette County upon an annual salary, approved March 24, 1965 (Ga. L. 1965, p. 2585), as amended, is hereby amended by inserting between the words "with" and "two" as they appear in Section 8 the following:

"not fewer than"

and by adding at the end thereof the following:

"if the governing authority of said county shall so determine",

so that when so amended, section 8 shall read as follows:

"Section 8. The county shall furnish the sheriff with not fewer than two automobiles equipped with short wave radios. The county shall be responsible for the operating expenses, maintenance and repair of said vehicles and equipment. Said vehicles shall be replaced every three years or at 75,000 miles, whichever occurs first, if the governing authority of said county shall so determine."

Section 2. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are hereby repealed.

Notice of Intent to Introduce Local Legislation.

Notice is hereby given that there will be introduced at the 1973 session of the General Assembly of Georgia, a bill to amend an Act placing the sheriff of Fayette County upon an annual salary, approved March 24, 1965 (Ga. L. 1965, p. 2585), as amended, so as to provide that the county shall furnish the sheriff with not fewer than two automobiles; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

This 22nd day of January, 1973.

/s/ F. A. Sams
Chairman,
Board of Commissioners
Fayette County

The size of the board of commissioners ranges from one to ten members. Most common are the five-member and three-member boards. In many cases the size of the board has no relationship to the population of the county. For example, the county with the most population, Fulton County, has a seven-member board of commissioners, while one of the least populated counties, Miller County, also has a seven-member board.

In a few counties the governing body is identified by its former title, like "Board of Commissioners of Roads and Revenues" or "Board of Finance." However, usually, if there is more than one commissioner, the title is "Board of Commissioners of ____ County."

All commissioners are elected, but the lengths of their terms of office vary from county to county. Most are elected to four-year terms, but in some counties the commissioners are elected to two, three, or six-year terms. In contrast, the terms of other elected county officials are set by state law and are the same in each county.

The requirements for the office of commissioner–such as age and residence in the county–and their salaries are not the same from county to county because they are determined by separate local laws. A **local law** is passed by the General Assembly to provide for a particular need in a specific county or city. (On page 21 you will find an example of a local law passed by the State Legislature for Fayette County.)

OTHER COUNTY OFFICES

In addition to the board of commissioners, each county has a number of departments and boards which help in carrying out the functions of county government. (See the organization charts on pages 13 and 14.) The number of divisions and of officials and their specific titles may differ from one county to the next. However, most counties have an elected sheriff, judge of the probate court, coroner, clerk of the superior court, and a tax official. Most counties also have appointed a county clerk, board of tax assessors, county attorney, board of health, and a public works department.

Each county department has at least a chief administrator, who may have one or more hired assistants. This department head holds an elected position established by the state constitution or by state law. He or she is responsible for carrying out specific duties which are usually defined by state law. Because department heads are elected, they are responsible to the voters of the county rather than to the county commissioners. This allows the department heads to operate somewhat independently of the commissioners, and it limits the powers of the commissioners over certain county affairs.

Appointed officials are usually chosen by the board of commissioners or by boards appointed by the commissioners. For example, the board of health, which is appointed by the board of commissioners, in turn, appoints its own director.

Judge of the Probate Court

The judge of the probate court has many important duties including the following:

- "Probating" (proving or checking the validity of) wills.
- Holding hearings to determine the necessity for committing an individual to an institution for mental illness, drug addiction, or alcoholism.
- Issuing marriage licenses and marriage certificates.
- Conducting state and county elections (except in Fulton and DeKalb Counties where election boards are empowered to do this).
- Issuing permits to carry firearms.
- Maintaining adequate records of these activities.

Until 1975 the judges of the probate courts of Georgia counties were called "ordinaries." That title was inherited from an old English law that was in force when the colony of Georgia was established in the 1730s. Since Georgia was an English colony, that law was applied to its internal colonial government. Under the English law, "the ordinary" was a judge possessing immediate jurisdiction in his own right to hear cases. The word "ordinary" was derived from a Latin term, "ordinarius"–the officer who first heard important civil and criminal cases during the Roman Empire.

Georgia has been the only state to use the title, "ordinary." Although a referendum and constitutional amendment changed the official's title to "judge of the probate court" in 1975, you will still see the title of "ordinary" printed on documents, stationery, and office doors in some courthouses. It will take a while for the change of title to be applied.

The probate judge's duties involve selling and disposing of property belonging to estates, filing wills, and filing all records furnished by executors and guardians of estates. The probate judge may be asked to make judgments regarding the appointment or removal of guardians of minors or the guardians of persons mentally unsound.

The probate judge has major responsibilities in conducting state and county elections. This county official receives and checks petitions of those wishing to run for office, receives and decides upon petitions for change in election districts, and publishes public notices of elections. He or she determines the polling places and equips them for use in primary and general elections. The probate judge also appoints poll officials, collects election results from the polling places, and certifies, publishes, and records them. All county records of election results are maintained by this official, and must be available for public inspection.

The probate judge is paid in one of three ways: (1) a salary is set by an act of the General Assembly, and the county collects the fees and pays the operating expenses; or (2) he collects for himself specific fees established by law for specific services, and from this pays for office assistance; or (3) he is paid by a combination of fees and a supplemental salary from general county funds set by a special act of the General Assembly which also provides funds for employing clerical assistants.

On the following pages, the probate judge of Clarke County describes the many responsibilities of her office.

INTERVIEW

Mrs. Ruby Hartmann, Ordinary (Probate Judge) of Clarke County*

Mrs. Ruby Hartmann was seated in a wheelchair in her office in the Clarke County Courthouse when I went in to interview her on a hot Monday morning in July. In spite of that wheelchair, she was busy answering the phone and directing preparations for the August primary elections.

"We're getting ready for the big elections. You see those wooden ballot boxes over there? We fill those with the forms and ballots they need at the polling places and send them out to the poll workers on election day."

**Mrs. Hartmann was interviewed before the title of her office was changed to "probate judge."*

She went on to clarify the extent of her responsibilities for setting up the polling places, providing the ballots and ballot boxes, appointing poll officials, receiving the results from each polling place, and publishing the final tallies.

I learned that Mrs. Hartmann was temporarily in a wheelchair because she had received a hip injury in the process of carrying out her election duties for the spring referendum on city-county consolidation.

"I was going around to the polling places, taking the poll workers their pay envelopes, and I fell getting out of the car."

When I asked Mrs. Hartmann how long she had been county ordinary, she told me that she had first been elected to the office in 1941 and had continued to hold the post through reelection since then. In 1941 she was elected from a slate of nine candidates in a special election held after the ordinary had died. She had worked for the ordinary and knew the job well.

"I told them I was the best woman in the race. I was the *only* woman running!"

Today Mrs. Hartmann is one of forty-four women who hold the office of ordinary in Georgia counties. She has been unopposed in the seven elections since she took office.

"This is not a job that attracts inexperienced people. This is a 'court of record,' and you must know how to keep detailed, accurate records."

All of the work of the ordinary's office is handled by Mrs. Hartmann and her assistant, Mrs. W. R. Bedgood, who has worked with her for over twenty years.

When I asked Mrs. Hartmann if the job had changed much in thirty years, she thought a minute.

"Not much." But she noted that her duties used to include hodling hearings to consider medical evidence to determine whether a person was so mentally ill that he should be committed to the mental institution at Milledgeville.

I asked her to tell me about her other duties as Ordinary or Probate Judge of Clarke County. She began by talking about her work as probate judge. She said she had dealt with four or five probate cases in the last month. She explained that most cases didn't take very long if she could get the parties concerned and their lawyers all there at one time.

"Some cases don't take long. If a person dies and doesn't leave a will, if there are no minors involved, the property is equally divided among the adult heirs generally without any problems."

Mrs. Hartmann talked about additional duties of the ordinary's office.

"We issue marriage licenses here. We've had the biggest year ever here. I believe last month was our biggest month–eighty-one licenses for the month of June."

She handed me an application form for a marriage license (page 26) and then showed me an example of a finalized marriage certificate.

"We issue the pistol toter's license too–about a hundred a year."

I looked over the application form for a license to carry a pistol or revolver which her assistant placed in front of me. (See page 27).

Mrs. Hartmann explained that careful record keeping is related to all of her tasks. All probate action must be recorded. All marriage licenses and certificates issued must be recorded. All pistol permits, all election nomination petitions, and all election results must be recorded.

Mrs. Bedgood added that the most change she had noticed was in the volume of work. Many more voters and polling places are served than in the past.

Ruby Hartmann noted another change which was in effect: the ordinary along with the tax commissioner and clerk of the court in this county will become salaried officials rather than being paid by fees. How did she feel about that? She said she thought it would come out about the same.

The ordinary seemed terribly frustrated by the restraints of the wheelchair as she urged me to "go ahead" and take a look around the big office to get a look at the election materials, the law library, and the volumes of records kept there.

Interview: July 10, 1973

Tax Commissioner (Tax Receiver and Tax Collector)

At one time every county in Georgia had both a tax receiver and a tax collector. By 1975 only 17 counties retained both offices, and 142 counties had a single tax commissioner who did both jobs.

The title of "tax receiver" may be misleading. He does not receive tax payments, but he does receive, file, list, and tally all of the county's tax declarations ("returns"). Sometime between January and May of each year, citizens of the county must file tax forms listing all the real estate which they own. They must also claim the value of their

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
VITAL RECORDS UNIT

APPLICATION FOR MARRIAGE LICENSE

STATE FILE NO. ____________________

COUNTY OF ____________________

COUNTY NO. ____________________

PERSONAL PARTICULARS	CONTRACTING PARTIES		CODE
	GROOM	BRIDE (MAIDEN NAME)	
1. FULL NAME			A
2. RESIDENCE: STREET ADDRESS			B
CITY	IN CITY LIMITS YES ☐ NO ☐	IN CITY LIMITS YES ☐ NO ☐	C
COUNTY AND STATE			D
3. AGE LAST BIRTHDAY DATE OF BIRTH AND RACE	AGE DATE OF BIRTH BLACK WHITE OTHER	AGE DATE OF BIRTH BLACK WHITE OTHER	E
4. BIRTHPLACE			F
5. RELATIONSHIP			G
6. USUAL OCCUPATION			H
7. BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY			I
8A. NUMBER OF PREVIOUS MARRIAGES	☐ NONE ☐ ONE ☐ TWO ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)	☐ NONE ☐ ONE ☐ TWO ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)	J
8B. IF PREVIOUSLY MARRIED HOW DISSOLVED			K
8C. UPON WHAT GROUNDS			L
8D. WHEN AND WHERE			M
9. ANY LEGAL IMPEDIMENT			N
10. FATHER'S NAME			O
11. FATHER'S BIRTHPLACE			P
12. MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME			Q
13. MOTHER'S BIRTHPLACE			R
14. PARENT'S RESIDENCE			S
15. DATE AND PLACE OF CONTEMPLATED MARRIAGE			T

STATE ORIGINAL

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING ANSWERS WERE MADE UNDER OATH AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME BY ONE / BOTH OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

THIS ____________ DAY OF ________________________ 19 ______

APPLICANT ____________________________

APPLICANT ____________________________

Signature of Probate Judge

OAS(5)—5 (Rev. 1-75)

37

Pistol Toter's Application, Bond And License

To Carry A Pistol A Person
Must Apply At the Probate Judge's Office

APPLICATION FOR PISTOL TOTER'S PERMIT

____
Date

Name ____

Address ____

Age __________ Born ______________ Race _______________

Resident of ________________ County since _______________

Have you ever been declared mentally incompetent?
If yes by what Authority? ______________________________

Have you been convicted of a Felony within the past 10 years
from date of this Application? __________________________

Have you been convicted of a Forcible Misdemeanor within the past two years
from date of this application? __________________________

License to carry one _______ Calibre ________ pistol or revolver No. ____________
for a period of three years.

____
Signature of Applicant

Sworn to and subscribed before me

This _____ day of ______________, 19____.

____
C. C. Probate Judge

taxable personal property such as furniture and television sets owned as of January 1. The value of the real estate property is determined by the county assessor. However, the individual taxpayer estimates the value of his taxable personal property.

Each year the county tax department records all the property returns in a large book called the **Tax Digest**. After the tax receiver completes and totals his bookkeeping in the spring, he sends one copy of the **Tax Digest** to the county commissioners. They will use it to determine the tax rate necessary to produce the amount of money needed for the county for the next year. Another copy is sent to the tax collector's office, and a third copy is sent to the State Revenue Commissioner for his examination and approval. After forwarding the digest, usually by summer, the work of the tax receiver is greatly reduced.

The tax receiver is elected to a four-year term, and he is paid either by fees based on the amount of taxable property listed in his digest or a stated salary.

Each county that still has a tax receiver also has a tax collector. He is also elected for a four-year term and may be paid in salary or fees similarly to the tax receiver. The tax collector's duties begin when the commissioners notify him of the tax rate after the **Tax Digest** had been prepared. He then prepares the individual tax bills, which usually are sent out in early fall. The taxpayer has until December 20 to pay his taxes.

The tax collector has his busiest time billing and collecting in the last half of the year, while, on the other hand, the tax receiver is busiest receiving and filing returns the first half of the year. Obviously, one official can do both jobs. It is easy to see why most counties have utilized the provision of the 1945 State Constitution which allows them to combine the two offices of tax receiver and tax collector into the one, four-year term, elected office of tax **commissioner**.

Which arrangement does your county have for preparing, recording, and collecting property and real estate taxes?

In preparation for your driving days, you may be interested to learn that it is the office of the tax commissioner (or the tax collector) that sells annual state automobile license tags in each county. In late February, in front of the tax commissioner's office, you are likely to see a long line of automobile owners waiting to purchase auto tags before the March 1 deadline.

ECHOLS COUNTY–OFFICE OF
TAX COMMISSIONER CREATED

No. 1119 (House Bill No. 1928).

An act to consolidate the offices of Tax Receiver and Tax Collector of Echols County into the office of Tax Commissioner of Echols County; to provide for the rights, duties and liabilities of said office; to provide for the election of the tax commissioner; to provide for the term of office; to provide for the method of filling vacancies; to make provisions relative to taxes and tax fi. fas.; to provide for compensation of the tax commissioner; to provide for personnel in the office of the tax commissioner and their method of compensation; to provide for the payment of expenses of the office; to provide that the tax commissioner shall not be required to make rounds for the purpose of receiving or collecting taxes; . . .

Georgia Laws, 1972 Session

In 1972 Echols County combined two county offices into one. Why is the office of tax commissioner an effective working combination of tax collector and tax receiver?

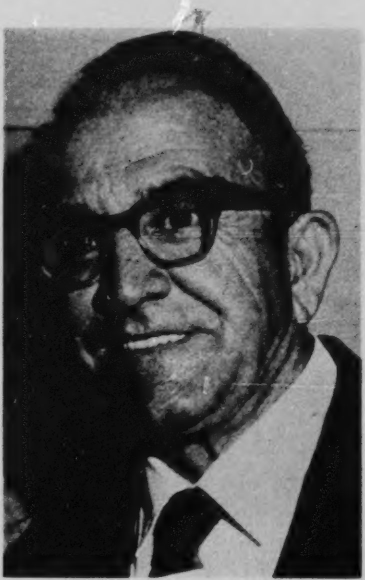
County Treasurer

Every county must have a means of keeping accounts of its public funds. Years ago, each Georgia county elected a treasurer to a four-year term to do this job. By 1970, however, there were only thirty-five county treasurers in the state.

The great majority of Georgia counties now use other means than the county treasurer to keep track of their funds. This is because the State Legislature has abolished the office of treasurer in many counties, allowing the counties to place their funds in depositories. In most counties, banks now serve as depositories, or the probate judge or one of the commissioners acts as a treasurer.

INTERVIEW

A Tax Commissioner Tells About His Department



Lamar Wages is a tax commissioner who knows firsthand the workings of his county department. He first worked as an appointed tax assessor in Gwinnett County in 1961. In the years that followed he has worked as an administrator of various operations in the tax department, and in 1967 he ran in an election to fill the unexpired term of Gwinnett County Tax Commissioner. He has been re-elected twice since then. Obviously, he is pleased to discuss the operations of the tax department and to consider the taxpayer's point of view.

Because of rapid population growth, the county has undergone a "building explosion." Property is being divided and sold at a high rate, and homes and businesses are being built in great numbers. Mr. Wages explained that this has resulted in a major expansion of the tax records and an increase in the numbers of tax department employees. Presently there are fifteen full time employees in his department, including six who process auto tag applications. The peak seasons are early in the year for auto tags and late in the year for property taxes, and at these times extra help must be hired.

When I asked him about the kinds of problems that people bring to the tax commissioner, he shook his head and responded, "It's unbelievable. There are all kinds of questions. Once someone called to ask how to get rid of rats! But usually, people are confused about how property is assessed and valued and about the whole process of ad valorem property taxes. I do enjoy working with people and I like to feel like I'm helping people."

Mr. Wages was very concerned that many taxpayers do not take care of their own best interests. He pointed out that many young couples fail to come in and apply for the Homestead Exemption which reduces their assessed valuation and thus lowers their taxes.

"There is a $2,000 Homestead Exemption which can save some tax money for people who live on their land. But some people just don't know how or just don't get in here to apply."

Mr. Wages also discussed the problem of delinquent taxes. People who buy land sometimes do not notify county officials of their name and current address. Tax bills do not reach them and their unpaid taxes have penalty fees added each year. The debt then grows larger and larger.

What did he consider to be the greatest problem in county taxation today? Land taxes.

"Something needs to be done to relieve the heavy ad valorem tax. Sales taxes and income taxes would both be better ways to support the schools."

Considering other possible sources of tax funds, he estimated that it would be difficult to calculate a land-use tax that was fair, and as for the personal property tax, he observed that it was not effectively applied and was not a dependable source of revenue.

Interview: June 19, 1973

Clerk of the Superior Court

Each county elects a clerk of the superior court. As the title indicates, the clerk attends all sessions of the superior court and keeps complete records of the court's actions in his county. (Chapter Four describes the county courts.) In addition, he compiles a court calendar, attends the drawing of jurors' names, keeps a list of jurors who hear each case, and pays jurors at the end of their term. The clerk of superior court also issues **subpoenas** (official notices which require specific individuals to appear in court).

These court duties are only a part of the clerk of superior court's many important responsibilities. Most people know the clerk's office as the place in the county courthouse where they must record all real estate transactions. Every deed, every bill of property sale, and home mortgage is filed in his office to maintain an official record of the transaction. This office usually serves as a file of general information for the county courthouse.

The clerk of the superior court is elected to a four-year term in every Georgia county.

Sheriff

The sheriff is probably the county official of whom you are most aware. This is partly because so many film "westerns" feature the sheriff and also because his duties tend to place him in view of the public.

Undoubtedly you have noticed the marked sheriff's car in your county. Perhaps you have seen or heard of a sheriff or one of his deputies giving a driver a ticket for breaking county traffic laws, or serving **subpoenas** to individuals requiring them to appear in court, or arresting a person and putting him in the county jail.

Every county in Georgia has an elected sheriff. It is one of the oldest offices in English law. The English sheriff had the important duty of carrying out the court orders in the "shire" or county. Sheriffs' departments in Georgia today have the same responsibilities of carrying out court orders and keeping a full record of these actions.

In addition, the sheriff is responsible for operating the county jail. As law enforcement agent for the county, he shares with state, federal, and other local law enforcement agencies the responsibilities for:

- enforcement of traffic regulations.
- control of the production and distribution of nontax liquor.
- preservation of the peace.
- protection of the health, lives, and property of county citizens.
- announcing, carrying out, and recording the proceedings of so-called "sheriff's sales" of confiscated or recovered property or goods.

Several counties also have an appointed county police patrol to help meet the needs for law enforcement in more heavily populated areas. The county police force and sheriff's department are meant to be cooperating and complementary agencies, but conflict over funding and powers has developed in a few counties.

BUT SHERIFF, I JUST COULDN'T SLOW DOWN WITH YOU FOLLOWING SO CLOSE IN BACK OF ME!

INTERVIEW

Meet The Sheriff of Elbert County

Painters were at work in the sheriff's office when I arrived at the Elbert County Courthouse. Although the office furniture was in some disarray, and paint cans and drop cloths were here and there, the sheriff and his deputies looked impressive in their neat new uniforms.

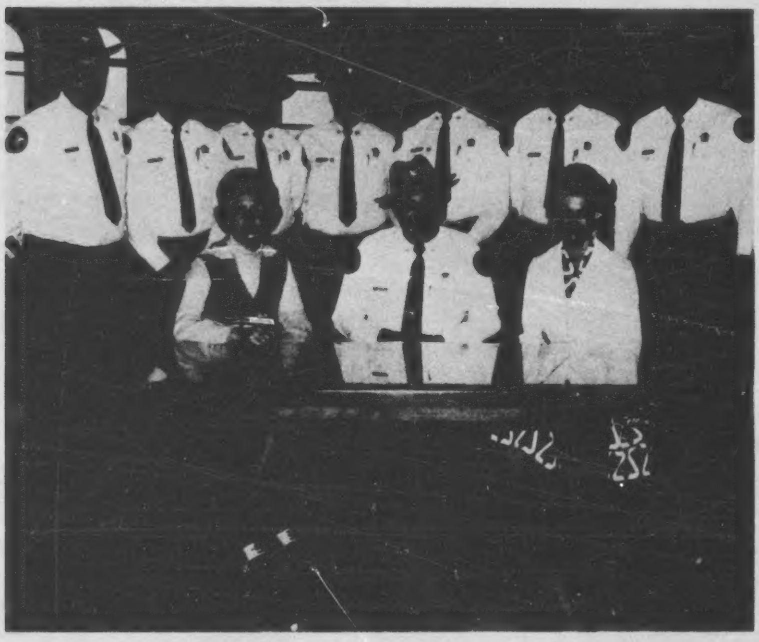
Sheriff Adger Moore was obviously busy that early afternoon, but he was very willing to take some time out to explain the details of his work. I first asked him to describe a typical day in his department.

"We start in the morning by checking the textile mills and the stone industry around here to see if everything is all right. We'll usually have calls about double parking, drag racing, or other traffic violations. We get calls about strange-looking vehicles, calls about cows on the highways, and we receive some domestic calls—fights and feuds—on weekends.

"Now, this afternoon we're going on a liquor raid. Before making this raid, we had to present all the information to the justice of the peace to show probable cause for a search. The justice of the peace must issue a warrant before we can raid the illegal still."

Sheriff Moore explained that he had a fairly large staff (seven full time deputies and two secretaries) because his department must carry out nearly all of the general police work in this county of over 17,000 people. (There is just one small city police force in the county, in the city of Elberton.)

"We do much of what city police do. We make trips to pick up criminals from other towns. For example, a criminal wanted by the Elberton police has been found in Chicago, so we'll have to go up and get him."



He also described the importance of working closely with the Georgia State Patrol, especially on traffic cases where out-of-county residents are involved. There are two types of traffic cases: (1) criminal cases and (2) civil cases. Criminal cases result from damage or loss of an individual's property. The sheriff pointed out that a criminal case is tried in the county where the crime is committed. A civil case, on the other hand, is tried in the county where the property is housed. This police work across county lines is dependent on coordination and assistance from the state patrol.

When I asked Adger Moore about the jail, he smiled and explained that the jail was his responsibility too.

"My wife and I live over at the jail, and we serve as jailers. Our living quarters are at the front, and the jail is at the back. Through the years my older children have helped with the work. But the meals are prepared by a cafe in town. Right now there are twelve people in the jail, and usually we have at least that many."

I asked the sheriff about cases involving young people under eighteen (juvenile cases). He said that if he or one of his deputies picks up a juvenile, then a juvenile officer must be called in. Juveniles are not held in the jail. Instead, they are either taken to the Youth Development Center at Gainesville or a petition and summons is served to the parents to take over responsibility for the youths. Juvenile cases are heard in a special juvenile court in Elbert County. The sheriff or a deputy must appear for the hearing.

Sheriff Moore introduced me to Mrs. Hazel Smith who has worked as his secretary for eighteen years. Mrs. Smith showed me detailed records which she keeps of the various types of cases handled by the sheriff's department. She pointed out that, in the last year, less serious traffic charges had brought in cash bonds of approximately $17,250. She noted that these traffic charges usually require a minimum bond of $37.50 which is often forfeited when the individual charged with the traffic violation does not appear for a hearing. All such traffic bonds are collected and turned over to the clerk of the court.

In addition, Mrs. Smith showed me a summary list of all of the cases handled by the sheriff's department in 1973. This case load of 1,627 offenses involved 1,271 people. Among the offenses listed were:

448 general traffic violations,
229 cases of speeding,
171 cases of D.U.I. (driving under the influence of alcohol),
85 cases of assaults,
76 fish and game violations,
69 cases of larceny,
47 worthless check charges,
35 juvenile offenses,
11 drug violations.

Interview: February 1, 1974

Coroner

Another title and office descended from English law of the 1700s is that of the coroner, meaning "officer of the crown." Perhaps you have noted the coroner appearing as a witness in a television drama involving a murder trial. It is the coroner's duty to investigate deaths in the county which occur under questionable circumstances. State law requires that any person who discovers a person who has died suddenly (1) when in apparent good health, or (2) as a result of suicide or accident, or (3) when unattended by a physician, or (4) in any suspicious or unusual manner must notify the coroner of the county where the death occurred or the body was found.

The coroner then immediately takes charge of the body and calls in a medical examiner and a peace officer to assist in his inquiry into the cause and manner of the death.

If the cause of death is uncertain and an autopsy is requested by interested persons, or if there is evidence of foul play and a criminal court calls for further information, an "inquest" or hearing by a five-man coroner's jury will be held. For such an inquest, the coroner directs the sheriff to summon five jurors from the county jury list. They hear the evidence and must reach their decision on the cause of death by majority vote.

The coroner is elected for a four-year term. In two counties the coroner's duties are carried out by an appointed official, the medical examiner, whose salary is prescribed by state law.

Who is the coroner in your county?

County Surveyor

The county surveyor is responsible for making a land survey and preparing a **plat** (a map or chart of a piece of land) whenever the county government requests one. This may involve measuring and partitioning of lands already owned by the county or other surveying in which the county is interested. The surveyor also carries out special surveys that are required by an appropriate court order.

The county surveyor must record–in a bound book–charts of all surveys made by him. He is paid by fees, which are regulated by law, for his services. In counties with over 17,000 population, the surveyor must be qualified by license from the State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. Only eighty-four counties elected a surveyor in 1973.

Public School Officials

You are probably well aware of the education official in your county known as the superintendent of schools. But do you know how he is selected? Do you know his usual duties? And how your school board is chosen, and how much authority it has?

Every Georgia county has a school system run by a school board and superintendent of schools. The method of selecting school board members and the superintendent is subject to the final approval of the voters of the county. To change this method, a local law must be passed in the State Legislature and must then be approved by a majority vote in a county referendum. (A referendum is a vote by qualified voters in a local area to determine whether a local act proposed by the Legislature shall become effective or not.)

In the 1973-74 school year, fifty-eight counties had school boards which were appointed by the county grand jury; ninety-seven counties had school boards elected by registered voters; and four counties had school boards which were chosen by a combination of methods. County school boards range in size from five members (Bryan County) to sixteen members (Richmond County).

In addition to the 159 county school boards in Georgia, there are 29 independent city school boards. The number of independent school districts has been decreasing gradually in recent years. While the State Constitution prohibits establishment of any new independent systems, it allows consolidation of any two or more existing systems.

Broad educational and administrative policies for all school systems in the state are determined by the State Board of Education. The county and city school boards generally have the authority and responsibilities which are not specifically delegated to state school officials. Their decisions involve purchasing equipment and supplies; constructing new buildings and additions; defining and changing school instructional programs; employing teachers, maintenance workers, and other personnel; and accepting the annual school budget.

The superintendent serves as the administrator of the school system, and he makes important decisions about how to carry out the policies handed down by the state and local board. He usually proposes a budget for the coming school year, and he often presents policy alternatives for the school board members to consider. In 1973-74 the voters of 117 counties elected their school superintendent. In forty-two other counties the superintendent was appointed by the school board.

The budget for the county school system is figured separately from the regular county budget, and the special property tax which is collected for school support is a separate tax. (This is explained in more detail in Chapter Three.) Public education is not funded by the county alone. A sizeable portion of the funds are provided by the state with additional funds coming from the federal government.

State support includes grants for state-approved textbooks, library books, vocational guidance, and testing; and support for the salary of the county superintendent, teachers' salaries, and general administration. The county school systems receive general state support based on the average daily attendance of the students enrolled.

Federal aid includes grants for milk and lunch programs, support of vocational education programs, funds to assist schools which accommodate students from families employed by the U.S. government or by the military, and special grants for materials or personnel provided for in special federal legislation.

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

In operation, county government offices may require appointed clerks, work crews, specialists, advisors or administrators to assist the elected officials. The number of appointed personnel varies from several office clerks and road maintenance personnel in the smaller counties to hundreds of appointments

(continued p. 38)

INTERVIEW

A Talk With Two County Clerks

County clerks from all over Georgia were gathered at the Georgia Center in Athens for a series of informative meetings. At the lunch break, I talked with Euline Johnson, who had served as County Clerk of Stephens County for two-and-a-half years, and Clint Taylor, who had served as County Clerk of Brooks County for fifteen years. I asked them to tell me about the work they do in the county clerk's office.

Euline Johnson, who works in the Stephens County Courthouse in Toccoa, began by pointing out that her daily work focuses on the meetings of the county commissioners. In her county, the commissioners meet on the first and third Tuesday of the month. One of these meetings is held in the evening for the convenience of working people who wish to attend.

Careful preparation of complete and detailed minutes of the previous meeting is an important part of her work.

Said Mrs. Johnson, "Most of the bills passed by our county commissioners are 'resolutions,' rather than 'ordinances.' And in our county these resolutions are presented and prepared formally, so they must be typed up carefully and correctly."

She also schedules the items to be considered and the people who wish to come and speak on the agenda of the next commissioners' meeting.

In addition, Mrs. Johnson does a great quantity of bookkeeping, including the preparation of the county payroll, payment of all county bills, and the processing of insurance and workmen's compensation forms. This load of work, plus answering people's inquiries about county road problems, had become too much for one person to handle in recent months, so her county has just hired a county coordinator. The coordinator now handles purchasing and road problems.

Commented Mrs. Johnson, "One of the interesting things in Stephens County is that we have a woman county commissioner now. She can see many of the needs for assistance in the office, and she even comes in and helps out. I can certainly say that I think there should be more women in politics!"

Clint Taylor, County Clerk of Brooks County, discussed some of his tasks in the courthouse in Quitman. Part of his work is to process purchasing for the county road department. He also pays and files all of the county's bills. He prepares copies of county resolutions passed by the Board of Commissioners, making sure that they have been typed, reviewed, and corrected. In his office there is a secretary who does all of the typing and bookkeeping.

Mr. Taylor pointed out that, in Brooks County, the minutes of the monthly meeting are published in the local newspaper along with a monthly financial statement showing how county funds have been spent. He observed that although the annual audit of the county funds is always available to the public, very few people ever come to the courthouse to see how their tax money is being spent. Therefore, the monthly newspaper report lets people know just what has been done by their county government.

In his county, Mr. Taylor explained, the recording of the action in the monthly county commissioners' meeting is not as detailed as that required of Mrs. Johnson. Mainly he records the motions passed and any items postponed or scheduled for future meetings. Unless there is "a right good bit of discussion" about an issue, then he need not record the discussion.

Both of the county clerks indicated that a big part of their job is dealing directly with individuals who phone or come to the courthouse with problems.

Said Mrs. Johnson, "An important part of my job is public relations, just treating people nicely."

Mr. Taylor agreed, "I doubt if I could mention a problem I *haven't* had a call about. The most common requests are for access roads, drainage pipes, and road maintenance.

"Some people want access roads built to their property, and that may involve acquiring a 'right of way.' Then, people come in for licenses for all sorts of things which don't need a license! I do *try* to answer every question and give the service that the county people want."

Because they are usually available in their courthouse offices, both clerks find that they receive complaints about all sorts of things. Both county clerks said that they try to hear people out and help them if they can.

Said Mr. Taylor, "Yes, sometimes folks pay their taxes in the tax commissioner's office and then walk next door to the clerk's office to complain and ask why their road has not been fixed."

Interview: June 13, 1973

in larger counties. For example, Fulton County has over 1,800 appointed division heads and general employees. The most commonly appointed offices are discussed below.

State law specifically authorizes the county commissioners to employ a **county clerk** to assist the board of commissioners. The clerk is responsible for recording official actions taken by the commissioners, preparing and processing correspondence and reports, and keeping commission records. He or she may assume many additional duties, particularly in those counties where this is the only assistant for carrying out the administrative and clerical tasks of the board. On pages 35-37, two county clerks discussed the variety of their work.

With the increasing complexity of county affairs, some counties have arranged for a fulltime administrator or executive to carry out the programs determined by the commissioners. The **county administrator** (in some cases called the **county manager**) is appointed by the board of commissioners or by the elected chairman of the commissioners. The administrator has such duties as the following:

- keeping records of the financial affairs of the county.
- preparing an annual budget to submit to the board.
- paying out monthly funds for expenses.
- issuing a monthly financial report.
- keeping records of all county property including equipment and supplies.
- serving as the county purchasing agent for equipment, supplies, and services.
- appointing and removing the heads of offices which are not otherwise elected or appointed.

The administrator's actions are subject to the approval of commissioners. In 1975, nearly thirty counties in Georgia had formally appointed county administrators. Among these were Bibb, Chatham, Clarke, DeKalb, Dougherty, Floyd, Fulton, Glynn, Hall, Muscogee, Polk, and Wayne counties.

In some other counties, the commissioners informally agree to appoint an acting county executive. Often they are appointed as clerks of the county board, who then assist the commissioners in carrying out administrative duties such as purchasing.

All but seven of the counties appoint a **county attorney**, who must be a lawyer. He provides the legal assistance frequently needed by the county commissioners in regard to their powers and duties. He also handles any civil law suits which may involve the county government. (He should not be confused with the district attorney who is an elected officer of the superior court district described in Chapter Four.)

A **board of tax assessors** is appointed in each county. It is responsible for the assessment of all county property at "its just and fair valuation" and the determination that each taxpayer shall pay "only his proportionate share of taxes." In counties of over 25,000 population, this board has three members appointed for six-year staggered terms. In counties under 25,000, the commissioners may appoint three to five members.

The job of a member of the board of tax assessors calls for some skill. Assessors must judge the fair market value of all taxable property in the county, including that in the cities of the county. They are expected to understand and uniformly apply the complex taxation laws. Since 1972, state law has required that tax assessors already in office must receive special training, and new appointees must first pass a qualifying exam before assuming the position.

County commissioners are responsible for appointing members to the other county boards and authorities. (See the charts of large county government and small county government in Chapter One). These usually include:

- the county board of health,
- the hospital authority,
- the board of family and children services,
- road department,
- county planning commission,
- industrial development authority.

Some of these departments may be jointly sponsored or jointly operated with the state, other counties, a city government, or the federal government.

An example of governmental cooperation is found in the boards of family and children services which serve most counties by providing job counseling, child care, family counseling, and financial aid to people in need in the county. The members of these boards are appointed by the Department of Human Resources of the State of Georgia on the recommendation of the county board of commissioners. The welfare services which the county board provides follow guidelines of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) as well as additional requirements set by the state. County, state, and federal funds jointly support this assistance to the needy.

The larger Georgia counties may have additional appointed offices such as a director of public information, director of civil services, data processing personnel, and a county police department.

Since the numbers of appointed officials vary from one county government to another, the boards of county commissioners of the 159 counties have varying responsibilities for appointing or nominating individuals to fill appointed positions.

Remember, there is also variety in the county elected positions. While every county elects a probate judge, a sheriff, one or more commissioners, and a clerk of the superior court, the other elected positions vary in title and duties from county to county.

CLOSE-UP

A County Health Department

What does the county health department do for people of the county? I visited a fairly large health facility, and I was surprised to learn *how many* free health programs the county offers. A tour and description of the county health department in a county of 60,000 give you an idea.

The offices of the health department were not in the county courthouse but were located in a separate, newer, brick building several blocks away. Inside, the appointment desk, waiting room, and examination rooms suggested a small hospital–simple, neat, clean, and modern. Several nurses and health workers were on duty when I arrived.

A cheerful and enthusiastic county health employee showed me around. She explained that volunteer workers serve as receptionists, interviewers, and assistants. Doctors and nurses carry out the treatment and diagnosing services of the clinics. The county health program here is extensive.

For example, in this county a special clinic is open two days each week to give disease immunization shots to county residents. By the time that children enter public school, they must have taken shots to prevent diptheria, polio, tetanus, measles and rubella. The county health department provides these shots free for county residents. Immunization shots for smallpox and typhoid fever are also available to adults or children who expect to travel to places where the protection might be needed.

This health department also runs a child health clinic two days a week to give complete physical checkups–including blood tests, nutrition tests, tests for tuberculosis, vision and hearing tests, and assessments of height, weight, and development. The clinic is open by appointment to all county children. Appointments must be made by parent or guardian.

I learned that in this particular county many women attend the maternal health clinic offered two mornings a week. This clinic provides complete care for pregnant women up to the birth of the child. This care includes physical checkups, diet counseling, and education sessions.

The county also offers a family planning clinic for women. On two afternoons of the week, blood tests, periodic check-ups, birth control information, and general counseling are available to any women of the county who wish to attend.

In addition to these major programs, this health department has a weight control clinic one morning a week to help people who need to lose weight do it with a well-balanced, nutritious diet. There is also a special clinic one morning each week where men and women may be checked and treated for venereal diseases. And, there are special clinics for men and women which offer blood tests to check for diabetes and skin tests to check for tuberculosis.

I learned from my guide that the county health department sometimes takes its diagnostic and immunization services to local factories and schools to make it easier for large groups of people to receive them. Perhaps you have been given hearing, vision, or tuberculosis tests in your school.

A combination of county taxes, state support and federal grants pay for these services, therefore they are provided without charge.

Where is your county health department? What services does it offer? You may wish to visit the health department in your county to learn more about it.

DISCUSSION

1. To which county official's office should you go for each of the following?
   - a) to obtain a marriage license.
   - b) to request an investigation into the recent questionable death of a relative.
   - c) to request permission for a right of way for an access road to a county highway.
   - d) to check on the current assessed valuation of property you own in the county.
   - e) to purchase an auto tag for your car.
   - f) to obtain a permit to carry a pistol.
   - g) to seek stricter enforcement of the speed limit on a county road.
   - h) to report an auto accident which has just taken place on a county road.
   - i) to seek to have a relative's will investigated and declared valid and official.
   - j) to record the purchase of a piece of farm land in the county.
   - k) to seek a resolution for the building of a new county bridge.
   - l) to find out how many votes each candidate for governor received.
   - m) to seek information about the results of a case heard in the superior court of your county.
   - n) to check on a county property tax bill which you recently received and which you think is unfairly high.
   - o) to report for jury duty.
2. What "control" does a citizen have over county officials? How does this control differ in the case of the county commissioner and the county clerk?
3. Which county officials seem to get the most public attention? Which officials appear to get the least public attention? Why?
4. How long does each of the elected county officials hold office before he must seek re-election by the people?
5. What county officials have duties which concern the private land of county citizens (e.g., recording property ownership, taxing the property, protecting it, etc.)? List the officials and describe what each one does in regard to property.
6. In what ways would life in your county be more difficult if all of the *appointed* officials were dropped from county government?
7. How many commissioners does your county have? Find out the name of each commissioner and whether he or she is a fulltime or part-time county employee and what is his or her general occupation.
8. Determine what other elected and appointed positions are in your county and find out the name of the person holding each office. Then prepare a county government organization chart similar to those shown in Chapter One. On the chart show the various elected offices and appointed department heads in your county and indicate the name of the person who holds each office.
9. Select several of your county officials to interview. Working in teams of two or three, make an appointment to talk to a county official. Carefully plan in advance the questions you wish to ask and the topics you wish to discuss. When you interview the official, take notes and/or use a cassette tape recorder to tape all or part of the interview. You may then use your notes and some taped discussion to report your interview to your class.
10. The cartoon shown on page 31 was originally drawn by an eighth grader. Draw your own cartoon which depicts a humorous situation involving a county official at work.

CHAPTER 3

SOURCES OF COUNTY FUNDS

Obviously it takes money to maintain roads, keep important records on file, provide police protection, maintain the courts, provide for a health program and a sanitation program and all of the other services of the county. Where does the money come from to pay for the operation of county offices which provide these needed services?

The main source of income is from taxes, but counties also obtain funds from several non-tax sources.

TAXES

Taxes are charges which a government levies on the people living under its jurisdiction and which they must, by law, pay. There are taxes on people's income, on land and other types of property, and on certain activities. County governments receive most of their funds from two types of taxes: taxes on property and taxes on business activities.

Property Taxes

According to the Georgia Constitution, as amended, there are three "classes" of property from which property taxes are collected. Furthermore, certain properties are "exempted" from taxation by the constitution. So in discussing property taxes, we will look at:

- Tangible Property
  - Real property (real estate)
  - Personal property
  - Public utility property
- Intangible Property
- Automobiles and Trailers (which require tags)
- Exempt Property

All property taxes are **ad valorem.** Ad valorem means "according to value," therefore taxes are based on the value of the property a person owns. The value which is placed on each type of property is regulated by state laws and affected by court decisions.

For all property, the assessed valuation equals a stated percentage of the **fair market value** for that property. Fair market value is what the property would bring if it were sold on the open market in the usual manner (i.e., a forced sale would not reflect market value). Since 1968, Georgia law has required that the assessed valuation of all property for tax purposes be set at 40% of the fair market value. Some municipalities have "local enabling acts" which allow assessment at a higher rate.

DOLLARS FOR COUNTY GOVERNMENT COME FROM:

- **TAXES**
  - PROPERTY TAXES on:
    - – Tangible Property (like houses)
    - – Intangible Property (like stocks)
    - – Motor Vehicles
  - TAXES ON BUSINESS ACTIVITIES
  - LOCAL OPTION SALES AND INCOME TAXES
- **FEDERAL AND STATE AID**
- **NON-TAX REVENUES**
  - – Charges to Users for Certain Services
  - – Licenses and Permits
  - – Fines and Penalties
  - – Miscellaneous Sales
  - – Bank Interest
- **BORROWING**

TERMS

ad valorem – "according to value"

fair market value – what the property would bring if it were sold on the open market at the usual value

assessed valuation – a stated percentage of the fair market value

tax return – form

tax digest – list of the value of taxable property in county

county tax rate – rate applied to the value of the property to determine the amount of taxes owed on it

homestead exemption – a reduction in real property valuations for people living on their land

expenditure – the spending of money

The county board of tax assessors, which is appointed by the county commissioners, is officially in charge of determining the value of each parcel of property within the county. However, when the value estimated by the board of assessors differs from the value the property owner puts on his **return** (tax form), the assessors must notify the property owner of the change.

At this point, if the property owner does not agree with the assessment, he has ten days (if a county resident) or twenty days (if a non-county resident) in which to file an appeal. In assessing property, the tax assessors must follow the guidelines which have been set by state laws and court cases. The assessors, therefore, provide the final valuations used by the tax commissioner in preparing the tax digests, which include all property in the county.

The actual amount of tax charged an owner of a piece of property depends on its assessed value and on the county tax rate (millage rate). This tax rate is set by the county commissioners and includes the rate needed by the county board of education. In determining the rate each year, both boards consider how much money they will need during the year in their budgets to provide services and carry on daily operations.

Boards of education may not exceed certain tax rate limits set by the state. Some local statutes also set limits on local millage rates.

TAX RATE = ESTIMATED COUNTY BUDGET ÷
ASSESSED VALUE OF PROPERTY IN COUNTY

The tax rate is a percentage of the assessed valuation of all property (tax or millage rate = budget divided by assessed valuation) and it varies from county to county depending on the county's financial needs.

The school tax is paid by the landowner at the same time as the county tax, but it is figured through a county school system budget which is separate from the county's regular operating budget.

The tax rate is expressed in mills. Ten mills is one percent. Therefore, a tax rate of 27.00 mills is the same as 2.7% or .027 of a dollar. And a tax rate of 17.50 mills is 1.75% or .0175 of a dollar. The **millage rate** (or tax rate) on property for each county in Georgia in 1975 is shown in Table 3. An individual property owner's tax is determined by multiplying the tax (millage) rate by the assessed value of his or her property.

AN INDIVIDUAL'S PROPERTY TAX =
ASSESSED VALUE OF PROPERTY OWNED
X TAX (millage) RATE

TABLE 8

1975 MILLAGE RATES BY COUNTY

COUNTY	RATE	COUNTY	RATE	COUNTY	RATE
Appling	15.75	Evans	25.25	Newton	31.50
Atkinson	15.20	Fannin	54.171	Oconee	21.50
Bacon	22.50	Fayette	24.12	Oglethorpe	16.80
Baker	13.75	Floyd	30.00	Paulding	23.75
Baldwin	27.50	Forsyth	27.21	Peach	26.75
Banks	19.9375	Franklin	19.91	Pickens	30.70
Barrow	21.32	Fulton	35.05	Pierce	21.12
Bartow	18.75	Gilmer	21.55	Pike	24.51
Ben Hill	22.90	Glascock	19.50	Polk	38.75
Berrien	18.25	Glynn	33.25	Pulaski	22.90
Bibb	34.50	Gordon	26.60	Putnam	21.15
Bleckley	22.00	Grady	18.08	Quitman	23.75
Brantley	19.17	Greene	20.00	Rabun	21.90
Brooks	23.43	Gwinnett	30.40	Randolph	13.70
Bryan	25.50	Habersham	37.00	Richmond	34.75
Bulloch	18.73	Hall	24.90	Rockdale	33.00
Burke	16.50	Hancock	28.00	Schley	23.63
Butts	28.60	Haralson	28.50	Screven	19.75
Calhoun	22.50	Harris	26.25	Seminole	21.35
Camden	26.25	Hart	26.00	Spalding	29.50
Candler	22.67	Heard	22.25	Stephens	35.00
Carroll	30.50	Henry	23.55	Stewart	21.25
Catoosa	30.95	Houston	31.17	Sumter	13.25
Charlton	30.50	Irwin	23.59	Talbot	13.25
Chatham	38.10	Jackson	18.25	Taliaferro	14.05
Chattahoochee	21.25	Jasper	14.20	Tattnall	17.25
Chattooga	31.00	Jeff Davis	18.20	Taylor	25.75
Cherokee	21.75	Jefferson	17.15	Telfair	22.75
Clarke	31.43	Jenkins	25.50	Terrell	15.933
Clay	18.00	Johnson	19.00	Thomas	21.50
Clayton	31.50	Jones	24.00	Tift	21.05
Clinch	18.70	Lamar	27.00	Toombs	18.00
Cobb	35.00	Lanier	25.75	Towns	22.50
Coffee	15.52	Laurens	27.05	Treutlen	22.45
Colquitt	26.95	Lee	21.50	Troup	20.52
Columbia	24.25	Liberty	29.75	Turner	18.75
Cook	23.65	Lincoln	19.00	Twiggs	18.25
Coweta	20.92	Long	28.50	Union	23.00
Crawford	24.00	Lowndes	24.57	Upson	24.25
Crisp	16.00	Lumpkin	20.85	Walker	27.50
Dade	29.00	Macon	24.70	Walton	21.86
Dawson	19.90	Madison	16.00	Ware	29.50
Decatur	20.00	Marion	28.50	Warren	23.50
DeKalb	41.90	McDuffie	18.25	Washington	18.69
Dodge	26.50	McIntosh	26.75	Wayne	20.50
Dooly	19.00	Meriwether	19.00	Webster	17.00
Dougherty	29.96	Miller	19.00	Wheeler	17.25
Douglas	26.00	Mitchell	21.15	White	21.75
Early	16.30	Monroe	26.75	Whitfield	31.75
Echols	15.60	Montgomery	15.75	Wilcox	14.875
Effingham	24.70	Morgan	16.00	Wilkes	18.00
Elbert	26.60	Murray	28.40	Wilkinson	17.50
Emanuel	24.16	Muscogee	46.44	Worth	18.05

Source: Georgia Department of Revenue, 1975

How Individual's Property Tax Is Determined

If Peter Titelboom's property in Floyd County had a market value of $20,000 in 1976, the assessed valuation (40% of $20,000) was $8,000. The tax rate was 30.00 mills (3%), so the property tax on that land was $240.00 (3% of $8,000 or .03 x $8,000).

At the time a landowner pays his county real property taxes, he also pays a small real estate tax to the state. This state tax is limited to .25 mill (one-fourth mill) by the State Constitution. Therefore, the state receives a payment of twenty-five cents for each $1,000 of assessed valuation. (See the sample tax bill on page 48.)

Let's take a closer look at each type of property and how it provides funds for the county.

TANGIBLE PROPERTY

Real property (real estate) – the land, buildings, and other fixtures and improvements on the land which are considered "permanent" or not easily movable. Most of the property in all of the counties comes under the category of "real estate."

Personal property – considered to be those certain "movable" items owned by individuals or businesses, such as furniture (excluding household furniture), machinery, boats and other vehicles, and inventories of merchandise. These items are also taxable at a maximum of 40% of their fair market value (unless local acts provide otherwise). The value of these items may also be estimated by the person or business firm which is filing the "tax return" (tax form), but, as with real property, the final determination of value lies with the county tax assessor.

Public utilities– are taxed on their real and personal property. This applies to railroad, pipeline (gas or oil), telegraph, telephone, power, and water companies. The property owned by private utility companies is in a special category because the values placed on them are set by the State Revenue Commissioner, although the utility then pays the tax to the county according to that county's millage rate. The revenue department also values airline flight equipment of major airlines (i.e., the actual aircraft which fly in and out of a county).

INTANGIBLE PROPERTY

There is also a tax on "intangibles" or property items whose value is not determined by physical characteristics. All intangible property is personal property. This includes stocks, bonds, savings on deposit in banks, and other items whose worth is represented by paper certificates.

The value of intangible personal property is estimated by the individual when he fills out his tax return. This tax return is sent to the state tax office where it is recorded and then forwarded to the county. But the tax money is paid directly to the county tax commissioner.

MOTOR VEHICLE TAXES

Motor vehicle taxes are another source of ad valorem taxes. The owner pays this tax each year when he applies for his state motor vehicle tag in the county tax commissioner's office. The assessed valuation of the vehicle is figured by the state based on the current sale value of the car, truck, or motorcycle. The rate of taxation varies from county to county.

EXEMPT PROPERTIES

Certain property, real and personal, is exempt (excused) from taxation by the Georgia Constitution. Although taxes are not paid on these properties, the county tax assessors, since 1971, have included all exempt property in their county in the tax digest.

The properties (real and personal) of religious, educational, or public charity institutions are generally exempt or excused from taxation. In addition, the State Constitution provides for a special reduction of real property valuations for people living on their land. This reduction is called a **homestead exemption.** It applies only to the property which the landowner uses as his residence.

The usual homestead exemption is $2,000, which is subtracted from the assessed

How the Homestead Exemption Saves the Resident Landowner Money

If Mr. Peach owned and lived in a home in Crawford County with a fair market value of $30,000 in 1973, the assessed valuation was $12,000 (40% of $30,000).

His homestead exemption was $2,000.

12,000
-2,000
10,000

So his taxes were figured on a net assessed valuation of $10,000.

The tax rate was 24.00 mills (2.4%), so his property tax was $240 ($10,000 x .024).

---

valuation of the property before the tax rate is applied. (See the example in the box above.) A homesteader over sixty-five with a **net income** (income after taxes) of under $4,000 is allowed two homestead exemptions ($4,000) on the assessed valuation of the land on which he lives. A disabled veteran is granted a $12,500 homestead exemption.

Homestead exemptions from the school tax on real property are sometimes figured separately. For example, as of January 1975, state law has said that a person who is sixty-two or over, whose total family **gross income** (taxes not subtracted) is under $6,000, shall be allowed a $10,000 homestead exemption from the assessed valuation on which the school tax is figured.

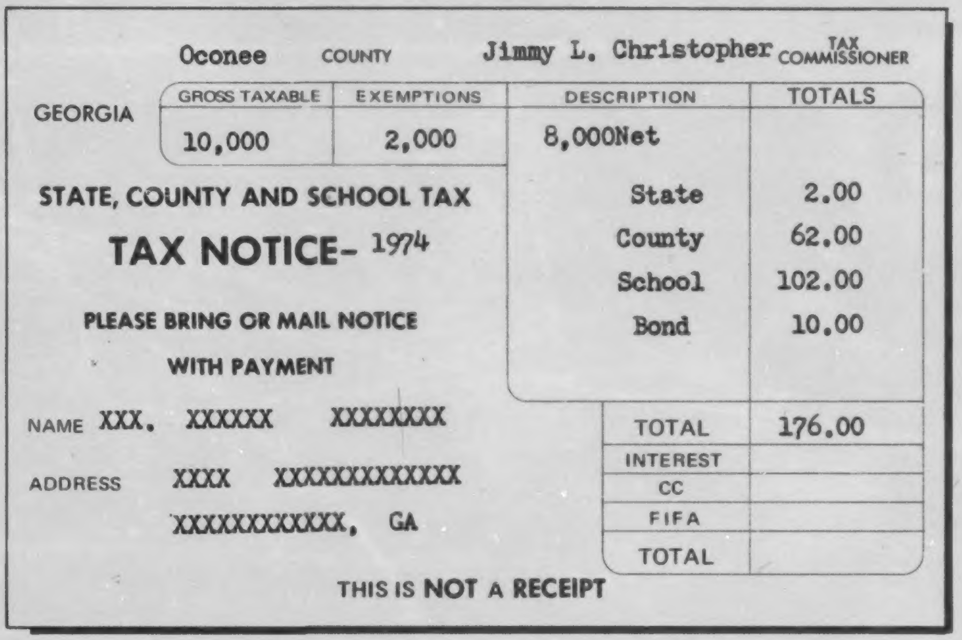
Persons who qualify for a homestead exemption must take the initiative to apply for it. If you become a homeowner, you will certainly want to apply for a homestead exemption. The various homestead exemptions, their codes (as shown on the county tax digest), and the dates for filing are shown in the chart. As a landowner, you will also want to know the current tax rate in your county.

People who live in rented housing or who use rented land should also be aware of the factors that determine what a tax will be, because the property tax paid by the owner is usually reflected in the rent charged to the renter.

There is also an exemption on farm products which remain in the hands of the farmer for one year after their production. This exemption allows the farmer time to sell his goods before they are considered taxable. Other exemptions are allowed for "laying hens" and "brood cows."

Code	Homestead Exemption	Filing Dates Jan. 1—Apr. 1
HO	None	not applicable
H1	$2,000 "regular" exemption	one time only
H2	$4,000 elderly exemption—65 years and older with net income under $4,000	one time only
H3	$10,000 school exemption—62 years of age with gross income under $6,000	annual
H4	$4,000 county exemption; $10,000 school exemption—65 years of age with gross income under $6,000 (combination of H2 and H3)	annual ($10,000–H3) one time only ($4,000–H2)
H5	$12,500 disabled veterans exemption	one time only

A Tax Bill



Oconee COUNTY Jimmy L. Christopher TAX COMMISSIONER

GEORGIA

GROSS TAXABLE	EXEMPTIONS	DESCRIPTION	TOTALS
10,000	2,000	8,000Net	
		State	2.00
		County	62.00
		School	102.00
		Bond	10.00
		TOTAL	176.00
		INTEREST	
		CC	
		FIFA	
		TOTAL	

STATE, COUNTY AND SCHOOL TAX

TAX NOTICE- 1974

PLEASE BRING OR MAIL NOTICE WITH PAYMENT

NAME XXX. XXXXXX XXXXXXXX

ADDRESS XXXX XXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXX, GA

THIS IS **NOT A RECEIPT**

A sample of a 1974 tax bill was provided by the Tax Commissioner of Oconee County. Note the $2,000 homestead exemption allowed to an individual living on his land. Note also that over half of the total of this real property tax goes for the operation of the county public schools. An explanation of each tax item is shown in the breakdown below.

Breakdown of a Property Tax Bill

Type of Tax		Oconee County Millage Rate		Valuation Base	Tax
State Property Tax		.25 (.025%)	X	$ 8,000	$ 2.00
County Property Tax	20.75	7.75 (.775%)	X	$ 8,000	$ 62.00
County School Tax		12.75 (1.275%)	X	$ 8,000	$102.00
School Bond Issue		1.00 (.10%)	X	$10,000	$ 10.00

Taxes on Business Activities

A county may be empowered by state-passed local law or by constitutional amendment to tax **businesses or occupations** for the privilege of operating in the county. Examples of businesses and occupations which might be taxed are: insurance companies, funeral parlors, factories, plumbing firms, lumber companies, mobile home sales companies, used car sales companies, and building companies. In some counties just about every type of business must pay some tax to operate its business.

Business and occupation taxes are used mainly to raise money for the county. They should not be confused with licensing or permit fees which are used to regulate certain business activities.

The amount of business and occupation tax a particular business must pay may be based either on its **volume of receipts** (or amount of sales), **number of employees, number of business fixtures,** (such as number of chairs in a barbershop), **size of business buildings**, or the **value of the goods in the building.**

In some counties, a major portion of business tax revenue comes from the tax on the wholesale or retail sale of beer, wine, and liquor. This tax, like other business taxes, must be reasonable and must be applied uniformly on all businesses of the same type. For example, a tax levied on beer sales must be charged to all stores, large or small, all over the country. Each store must pay the same percent of the total money received for beer sales or the same fee per container. In Georgia, local governments may not levy taxes on mixed drinks.

Local Option Sales Tax

In 1976, the **local option sales tax** will be collected in thirteen Georgia counties and the city of West Point. Local option means that each county or city may vote on whether or not to have a one percent sales tax in addition to the three percent tax already collected by the state. Once the sales tax is imposed on local citizens, the county or city must reduce its property taxes by the amount of the sales tax revenues collected.

The local sales tax has some advantages. Taxpayers consider it the most convenient type of tax since they only pay a little bit each time they buy something. Also, it is a good source of revenue for counties and cities that have many shopping areas.

On the other hand, the local sales tax has some disadvantages. One is that a county or city which imposes it may lose sales to nearby shopping areas that do not have the local sales tax. Another disadvantage is that the sales tax is regressive. This means that the tax takes a larger percentage of a lower income family's money than of a higher income family's money. (This happens because a higher income family doesn't spend as large a part of its income as a lower income family does.)

However, some states have reduced the **regressivity** of the sales tax through the use of **exemptions** or **tax credits.** The **exemption method** means certain items, such as food and medicine, are not taxed. This method gives the same tax relief to both higher and lower income families.

The **tax credit method** is used to grant tax relief only to lower income families. One way the tax credit method works is called the **circuit breaker.** Just as when the load gets too heavy on an electrical circuit, and a circuit breaker temporarily cuts off the electrical flow, the sales tax circuit breaker cuts off the sales tax on an overloaded family when it exceeds a certain portion of their income. However, Georgia has neither the exemption method nor the circuit breaker method.

FEDERAL AND STATE AID

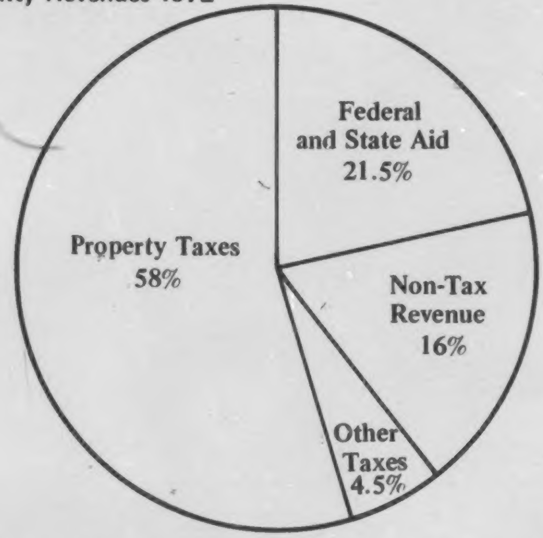
You can see from the chart that federal and state aid is a major source of funding for Georgia's county governments. Just over one-fifth of the funds utilized by Georgia counties in 1972 came from state and federal aid programs.

Federal Funds

Federal funding assists the budgets of Georgia counties considerably. The major source of federal assistance is from **revenue sharing** which provides for portions of the personal income tax collected by the federal government to be turned over to state and local governments. The amount of money which is turned over to each level of government is based on formulas which take into account the population, taxes, income per person, and the amount of money already being received from other governments.

FIGURE I

Sources of Georgia County Revenues 1972*



*Percentage figures from *Local Revenue Sources: An Analysis of Local Revenue Alternatives.*

Federal revenue sharing funds may be used for:

a) **capital expenditures**–spending for major improvement of government equipment, buildings, or other long-lasting or "permanent" items; and

b) **operation and maintenance expenditures** for specific priority areas which are:

1. public safety (including law enforcement, fire protection, and building code enforcement)
2. environmental protection (including sewage disposal, sanitation, and pollution control)
3. public transportation (including transit systems, streets, and roads)
4. health
5. recreation
6. libraries
7. social services for the poor or aged
8. financial administration

The counties of Georgia received $41.3 million in federal revenue sharing funds for 1972, the first year of the program. A recent study examined the ways in which Georgia counties spent their shares of that money. Sixty counties (twelve urban and fifty-four rural counties) responded to a questionnaire sent to all counties in the state. Table 4 summarizes the results.

The differences in expenditures between the urban and rural counties indicate differences in needs. The chart reveals that the rural counties spent about half of their revenue sharing funds on "transportation." Transportation expenditures include street and road construction and the repair or purchase of road work equipment. The second largest amount in rural areas was spent on public buildings.

In the twelve urban counties, the largest portion of revenue sharing expenditures was for "public safety." Social services and environmental protection received a third of the federal funds spent by urban counties. Overall, it is evident that federal revenue sharing funds support many important areas of county government service.

TABLE 4

Expenditures of Revenue Sharing Funds by Size of Counties Responding to Questionnaire (in Percentages)*

Expenditure Category	all counties (66)	rural counties (54)	urban counties (12)
Transportation	22.2	50.4	11.8
Public Safety	21.2	6.6	26.5
Environmental Protection	14.1	9.1	15.9
Social Services	13.5	1.2	18.0
Public Buildings	11.0	11.2	11.0
Health	7.6	8.3	7.3
Financial Administration	2.3	6.4	0.8
Miscellaneous	4.2	5.5	3.8
Total Percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Dollars	$26,823,681	$7,459,269	$19,364,412

*Counties over 50,000 population are identified as urban counties, and counties under 50,000 population are identified as rural counties.

State Aid to Counties

One widely used type of state support is aid for road development. This funding comes from the state motor fuel tax, road-building contracts from the State Transportation Department, and direct state assistance. The funds are used to build new roads, to improve and keep up already existing roads, and to pay for the cost of road maintenance equipment and supplies.

The state also provides funds to the counties for many other public use purposes such as sewer construction, water systems, forest fire protection, family and child welfare services, airport development, and county health services, including pollution control and hospital services.

NON-TAX REVENUE

Counties receive several types of non-tax revenues including charges for services to the users of those services, fees for licenses and permits, fines and penalties, funds from miscellaneous sales, and interest from money deposited in banks.

Charges to Users for Services

Many counties receive funds from charges made to people in the county who use certain services which the county provides, and these funds provide most of the non-tax revenues of Georgia counties. Individuals or businesses may pay fees to the county for hospital services; school book rental; building inspection by firemen; rental of public rooms, recreation facilities, or public buildings for private use; the services of police guards for payroll transportation or for private gatherings; waste collection when it is not provided for all county residents; and other types of specific services.

Licenses and Permits

Licenses and permits are fees collected by the local government with the main purpose of regulating the activity for which the fee is charged. For examples, lawyers, doctors, undertakers, plumbers, chiropractors, or well-diggers may be required to be licensed in a particular county.

Permits are issued to authorize specific actions such as building construction, or construction of a culvert or a driveway with access to a public road, or placement of a mobile home.

Borrowing

To finance a special construction or special repair, the county may issue bonds. This is actually borrowed money. The bonds are loans of specified amounts of money from banks or individuals. Along with repayment of the amount of money they have loaned the county, the individuals receive an interest or return for their money.

Funds from bonds may be used to build a bridge, a school, or a public utility, repair a road, or for some other specific purpose. Bonds may not be used legally to fund general operating expenses.

Bonds are paid off by dividing the costs among property owners and adding a small amount to every real estate owner's annual tax bill. (See the copy of a tax bill on page 48.)

What are some of the new or additional service requirements of the public in your county which might contribute to the huge bundle labelled "Demands for Services" in the cartoon?

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Cartoon removed by ERIC due to copyright
law.
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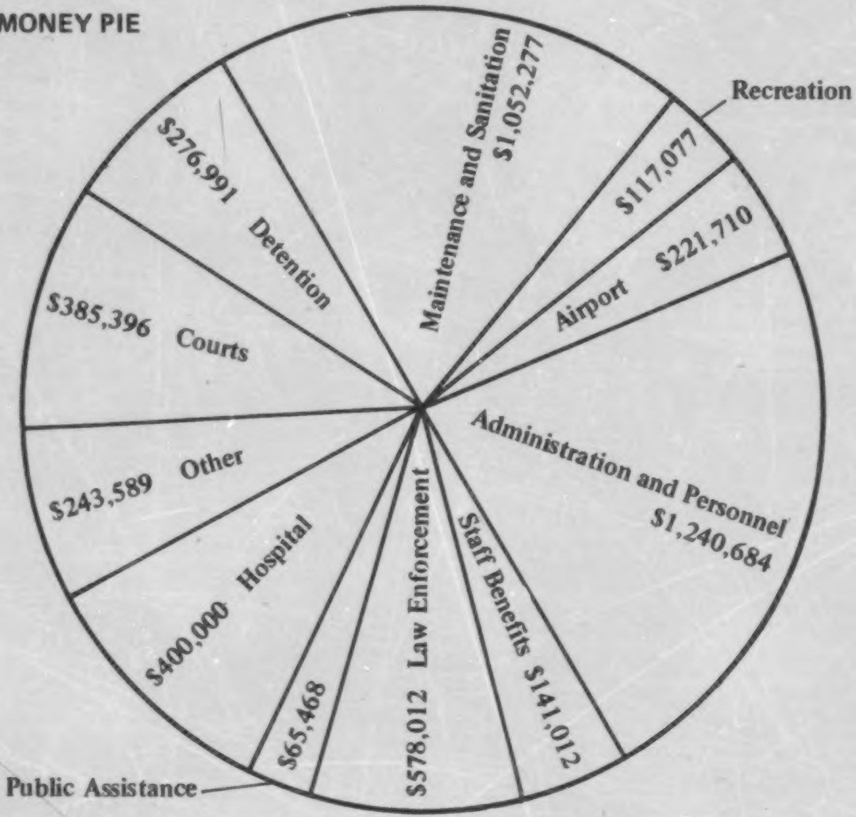
Baldy, *Atlanta Constitution*. By permission.

FIGURE 2

HOW THE MONEY PIE IS SLICED



An Example of How A Georgia County Divides Its Funds

This chart shows the breakdown of the 4.7 million dollar Clarke County budget for 1975. It appeared in the *Athens Banner-Herald* on July 7, 1974 as part of a report on county spending. Note that the school budget is not included.

DISCUSSION

1. What are the various sources of funds for operating county government? Can you list and describe ten different possible sources?

2. What are the three types of property taxes collected by the counties? Explain how they differ.

3. Figure the property tax on:
   a) Land and house (in which the owner lives) with a total fair market value of $65,000. (Remember that the state has set the assessed valuation figure at 40% of the fair market value.) The property is located in a county with a tax rate of 25 mills.
   b) A home and land with a market value of $26,000 on which the owner (age sixty-six, with an annual income of $3,800) lives, located in your county. (Millage rate shown on Table 3.)
   c) A farm with a fair market value of $40,000 in Lamar County, on which the owner does not live. (The millage is shown on Table 3.)
   d) A large tract of land in your county with a fair market value of $150,000.

4. The cartoon on the next page was printed on the cover of the *Georgia County Magazine* in April 1972. What does the cartoon have to say about the costs of operating schools and the present sources of school funds? What are some of the possible "other tax sources" for school support in Georgia?

5. Look back at the interviews with a county commissioner and a tax commissioner in Chapter Two. What views did each of these officials express concerning the ad valorem real property tax as a source of county income?

6. Look over the graph on page 55. How much has the collection of property taxes increased from 1960–1970? From 1970–1975 (estimated)?

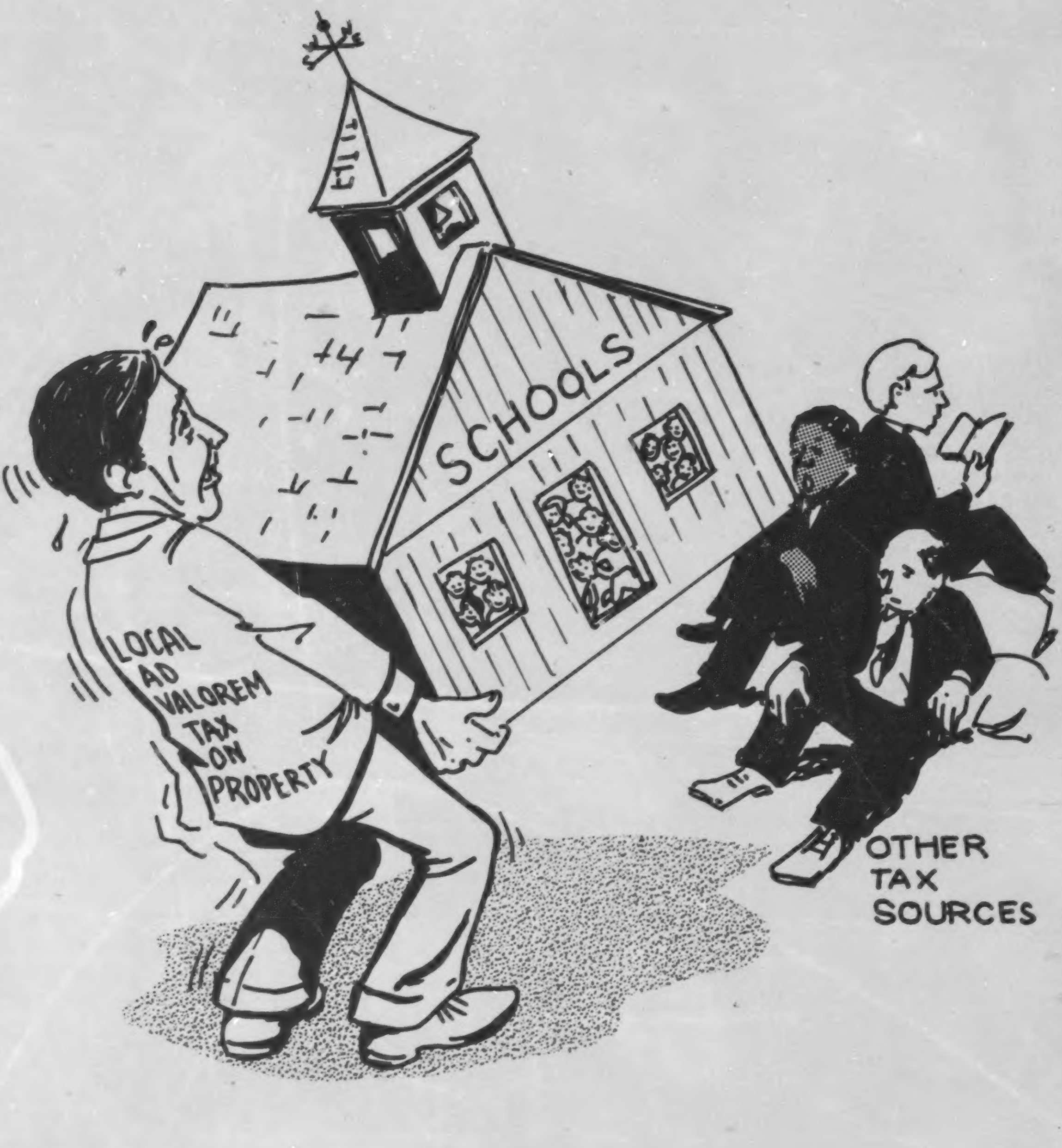
7. Compare the information from the graph to the point of view expressed in the cartoon. What reasons can you give for the complaints about the burden of school expenses in spite of the increases in property tax revenue?

8. May counties spend the money received from federal revenue sharing funds any way the county commission wishes? Explain. Visit or write the office of the county commissioners of your county to find out how revenue sharing funds were spent in your county last year.

9. What are the two greatest sources of county revenues?

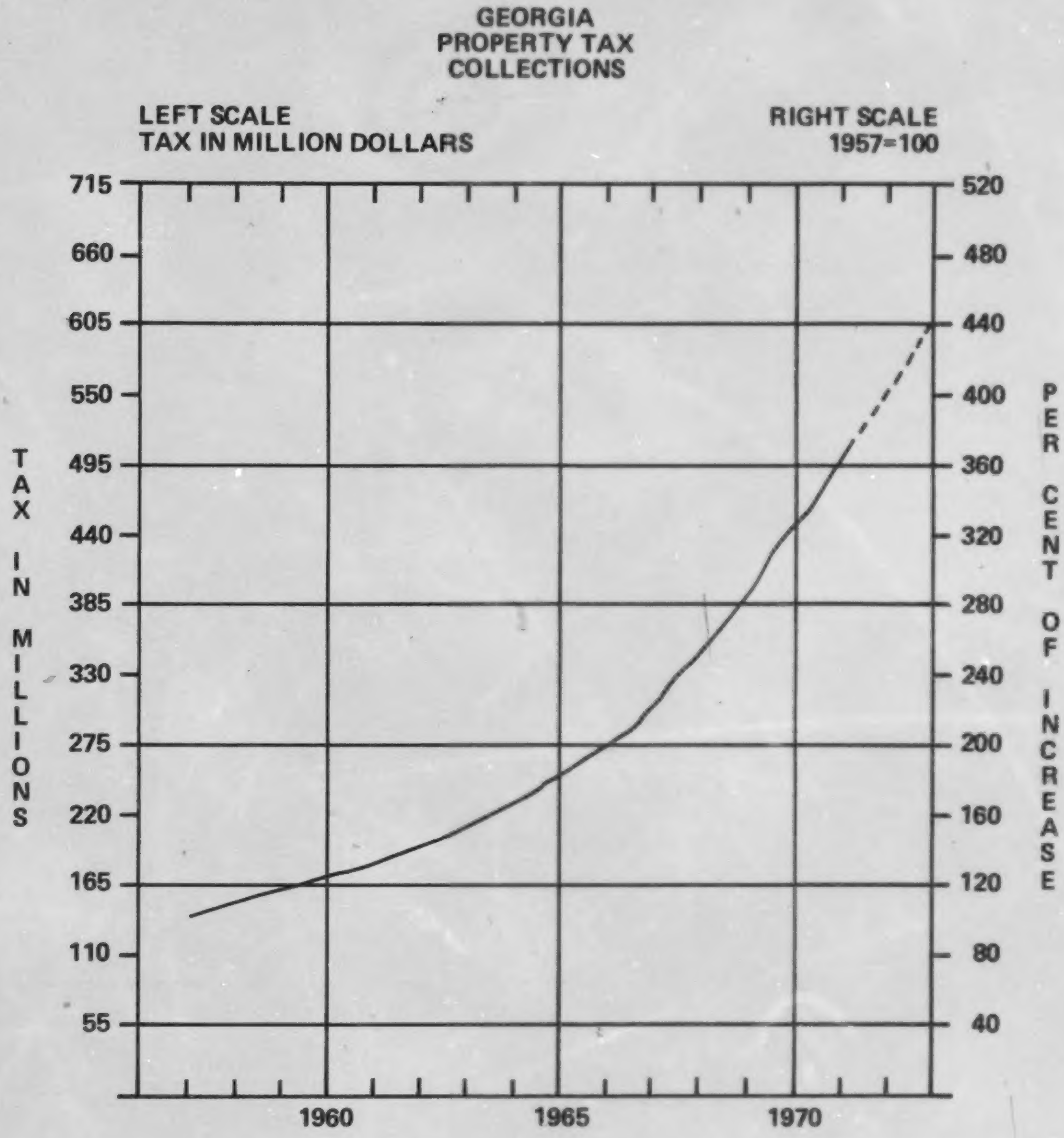
10. In the chart showing one county's operating budget on page 52, what were the five largest areas of county expenditure? Find out how operating funds were distributed in your county this year, and compare to this chart. (The county clerk or the commissioner's office should be able to give you this information.)

11. Find out what the ad valorem personal property tax on motor vehicles would be in your county for:
    a) a 1974 Suzuki, TS 185CC motorcycle.
    b) a 1970 Chevrolet Impala, sedan, 4 door, 8 cylinder.
    c) a 1972 Ford pickup truck, 3/4 ton, 8 cylinder.
    d) a 1974 Cadillac DeVille, sedan, 4 door, 8 cylinder.
    e) a 1963 Volkswagen Beetle, 4 cylinder.
    f) a 1973 Plymouth Duster coupe, 6 cylinder.


SCHOOLS
LOCAL AD VALOREM TAX ON PROPERTY
OTHER TAX SOURCES

Georgia County Government Magazine, cover, April 1972.

FIGURE 3



SOURCE: Governmental Finances published by U.S. Department of Commerce 1957–1971

From: The Office of the Governor, State of Georgia, *Georgia State and Local Government Coordination Study*, December 1972.

CHAPTER 4

THE COURTS

Courts have been important in Georgia counties from the time they were formed. One of the original purposes for the establishment of counties by the state was to provide a court of law in each local area to hear whatever cases arose. (Notice that the building which serves as the center of the government of each county is named for its judicial function—"the county courthouse.") In fact, the first administrators of Georgia counties, back in the late 1700s, were judges who were appointed for each county by the state legislature. They not only sat as a court of law, but they managed county affairs. These "judges of the inferior courts" provided each county with those judicial services of government which protect our rights and property and help maintain an orderly society.

Today the court or courts which serve the people of your county area are part of a judicial network or system which spans the whole state of Georgia. This chapter will focus on the superior courts—the basic trial courts of the counties. It will also describe the other courts found in some of the counties, the basic types of cases, the organization of the courts, the judicial officials, and the part which individual citizens play in the system of justice. All of this information will help you to better understand the judicial process in your county and in Georgia.

CASES

Two basic types of cases may be heard in the county courts—**civil** or **criminal** cases.

Criminal Cases

In a **criminal case** an individual is accused by the state of violating a specific state law (or laws). The penalty for committing the crime is usually stated in the law. When a criminal case is heard in court, the state, as the **prosecution**, is represented by the district attorney. The accused person is the **defendant** and is represented by a defense lawyer. In a criminal case, the burden of proving the individual's guilt is on the state.

Criminal charges may be one of two types: felonies and misdemeanors.

Felonies are the more serious crimes. They are punishable by a fine of over $1,000, imprisonment for more than twelve months, or by death. For example, murder is a felony. In Georgia, in a felony case the defendant is tried before a jury unless he gives up that right and requests that the judge decide whether he is

TABLE 5

Felony Crimes by Age Group
Committed From July 1971 to July 1972
Reported by the Georgia Department of Offender Rehabilitation*

Type of Offense	16 & Under	17 – 19	20 – 25	26 & Over	Unknown	Total
Burglary and Possession of Burglary Tools	1	298	650	509	26	1484
Theft (Shoplifting, Extortion, etc.)	1	294	452	370	17	1034
Robbery (Use of Force in Stealing)	6	109	358	217	8	698
Drug Offenses (Sale, Distribution, Possession, etc.)		52	292	257	22	623
Bodily Injury (Assault, Battery, Kidnapping, etc.)		50	168	221	11	450
Homocide (Murder, Manslaughter)	2	22	110	255	11	400
Deceptive Practices (Forgery, Illegal Use of Credit Card)	1	30	144	200	2	377
Sexual Offenses	1	23	62	53	1	140
Obstruction of Law Enforcement (Escape, Aiding Escape, etc.)		14	37	67	2	120
Criminal Damage to Property (Damage to Defraud, etc.)		17	19	7		43
Arson (Knowingly Damaging Another Person's Property by Fire)		8	16	11	3	38
Crimes Involving Dangerous Instruments (Weapons)			9	5		14
Invasion of Privacy (Eavesdropping, Peeping)			5	5		10
Malicious Mischief Offenses (Cruelty to Child)			2	5		7
Falsification (Perjury, Impersonating)			2	2		4
Disorderly Conduct & Related Offenses		2	1			3
Distributing Obscene Material				1		1
Criminal Abortion				1		1
Gambling and Related Offenses				1		1
Miscellaneous (Conspiring to Commit a Felony, etc.)		26	63	55	2	146
Total	12	845	2390	2242	105	5594

*Compiled from the 1971-72 report of the Georgia Department of Offender Rehabilitation which is the state agency which administers the corrections, rehabilitation, parole and probation programs of the state.

guilty or not. (See Table 5 for list of felonies.)

Misdemeanors are less serious crimes than felonies and carry lesser punishments in the state laws. Carrying a pistol without a license is, for example, a misdemeanor. Misdemeanor cases are usually heard and decided by a judge without a jury unless the defendant requests one. (Table 6 lists common misdemeanors.)

Civil Cases

A **civil case** is a non-criminal case which involves the private rights of individuals. It is usually brought to court by one individual, the **plaintiff**, against another person, the **defendant**, to recover money owed or demanded for harm done, to protect a right, or to prevent a wrong. Some of the grievances which are taken up in civil cases or suits include destruction of property, personal injury, debt, breaking a contract, and divorce. Civil law suits may also be brought by individuals against the government. A civil case may be tried with a jury, or if both sides agree, by a judge without a jury.

Equity cases are special civil cases in which the plaintiff either attempts to prohibit an action by a person or group, or requires an action by a person or group. For example, one individual may seek a court order to keep his neighbor from damming a stream which runs through both of their properties, claiming that the neighbor's action would damage the plaintiff's land. Decisions in equity cases are based on considerations of what seems to be fair when the rules of law cannot produce a fair decision.

TABLE 6

The Ten Most Frequent Misdemeanor Crimes Committed
From July 1971 — July 1972
Reported by the Georgia Department of Offender Rehabilitation*

	Crime	Cases
1.	Operating an Auto While Intoxicated	417
2.	Theft by Taking	276
3.	Violation of Motor Vehicle Law	261
4.	Concealed Weapon & Carrying Pistol Without License	205
5.	Assault & Battery	169
6.	Abandonment	139
7.	Receiving Stolen Goods	117
8.	Violation of Drug Act	93
9.	Forgery	79
10.	Escape	69

*compiled from the 1971-72 report of the Georgia Department of Offender Rehabilitation.

THE SUPERIOR COURT SYSTEM

Each county in Georgia is served by a superior court which is part of the state's judicial system. The superior court is the basic trial court for violations of state law (criminal cases) and for civil cases. Superior courts have exclusive jurisdiction (authority to try or hear) in felony cases (criminal) and civil cases concerned with land titles, equity, and divorce. In addition, the superior courts may hear appeals of certain cases which were first tried in lower courts, such as the probate courts (see Chapter Two), municipal courts, or justice of the peace courts. If there is no juvenile court in the county, a superior court judge hears juvenile cases in special session.

The superior courts of the 159 counties are presently grouped into 42 districts which are called **circuits**. Each circuit includes from one to eight counties. While each heavily pop-

GEORGIA SUPERIOR COURT CIRCUITS AND NUMBER OF JUDGES

1. Alapaha (1)
2. Alcovy (1)
3. Atlanta (11)
4. Atlantic (2)
5. Augusta (4)
6. Blue Ridge (2)
7. Brunswick (2)
8. Chattahoochee (3)
9. Cherokee (1)
10. Clayton (2)
11. Cobb (3)
12. Conasauga (2)
13. Cordele (1)
14. Coweta (2)
15. Dougherty (2)
16. Dublin (1)
17. Eastern (3)
18. Flint (2)
19. Griffin (1)
20. Gwinnett (2)
21. Houston (1)
22. Lookout Mountain (2)
23. Macon (3)
24. Middle (1)
25. Mountain (1)
26. Northeastern (2)
27. Northern (1)
28. Ocmulgee (2)
29. Oconee (1)
30. Ogeechee (1)
31. Pataula (1)
32. Piedmont (1)
33. Rome (2)
34. South Georgia (1)
35. Southern (2)
36. Southwestern (1)
37. Stone Mountain (7)
38. Tallapoosa (2)
39. Tifton (1)
40. Toombs (1)
41. Waycross (2)
42. Western (1)

ulated county has enough cases to form a separate district, most counties are grouped with one or more others and are served by one or more judges. (Look at the map on page 61 to determine in which circuit your county is located.)

Superior Court Judges

A superior court circuit may be served by one or more judges. Currently the number ranges from one to eleven. When a circuit includes several counties, the judges conduct the court in one county for a few weeks to hear the cases brought up there, and then they travel to another county in the circuit to hear the cases there. The judges of a circuit must hear cases in each county of the circuit at least twice a year.

In contrast to a number of other states where judges at the county level are appointed, the Georgia judges are elected. Superior court judges are elected by the voters of the county or counties which they serve for terms of four years, except in the Atlanta Circuit (Fulton County) where the term is eight years.

To run for a superior court judgeship, a person must be at least thirty years old. He or she must have been a citizen of Georgia for at least three years and have practiced law for at least seven years.

The District Attorney

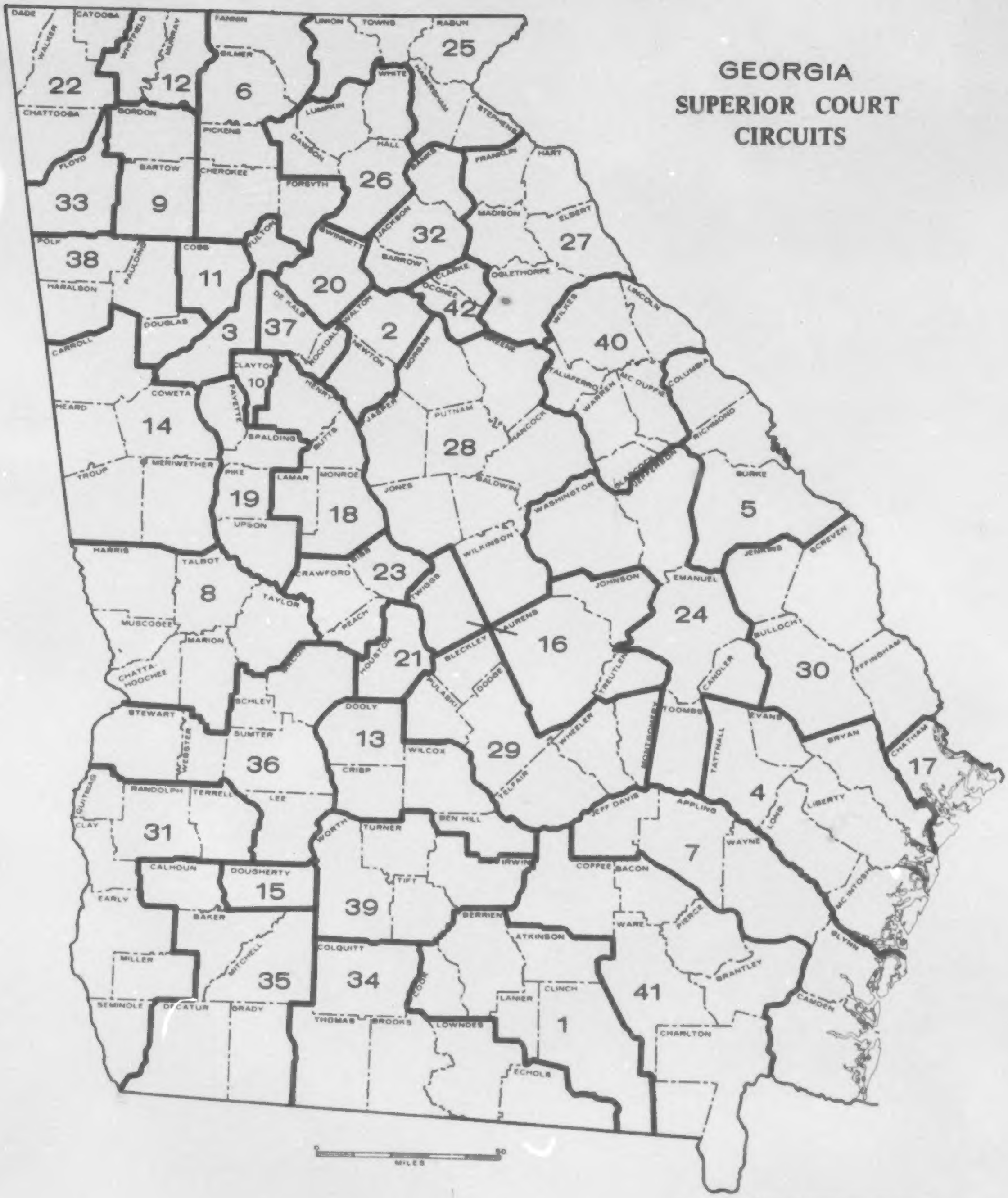
Each superior court circuit elects a district attorney who attends each session of the superior court in each county of his circuit. In cases brought by the state against individuals, the district attorney serves as prosecuting attorney. In cases brought against the state by individuals, he serves as the state's defense attorney.

The district attorney is also the legal advisor to county law enforcement officials in his circuit over such matters as search warrants, arrest warrants, and drug raids.

In a felony case the district attorney ordinarily must first present the case to a **grand jury**. (This is the preliminary jury which must decide whether there is enough evidence to formally charge a person with a crime.) He presents the facts and calls witnesses to testify, questioning them to bring out further information about the case. If the grand jury finds that there is enough evidence to accuse a person and have him stand trial for the crime, the district attorney draws up a formal document called an **indictment**. The indictment provides the accused person with a full description of the charges brought against him. The indicted person will then stand trial with or without a trial jury.

In misdemeanor cases the district attorney can prosecute the case by means of a formal **accusation** brought before the court, and need not first obtain a grand jury indictment. In felony cases where the defendant cannot be sentenced to death, the district attorney can also prosecute without obtaining an indictment, if the defendant gives up his right to be indicted.

MAP 3



DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

To qualify to run for the office of district attorney, an individual must live in the superior court district, be at least twenty-five years old, have been a Georgia citizen for at least three years, and have practiced law in superior courts for at least three years.

The Juries

The superior court is served by both grand juries and trial juries.

The Grand Jury

The grand jury is made up of sixteen to twenty-three registered voters of the county. As was described above, the grand jury considers the evidence in a criminal case in order to decide whether or not the accused individual should be formally indicted (or charged with the crime) and required to stand trial. A grand jury's decision to indict a person is called a "True Bill." If the grand jurors decide that there is not enough evidence to indict a person, they return a "No Bill." The grand jury does not decide on a person's guilt or innocence.

In Georgia the grand jury also has powers in civil matters. It may be called upon to inspect, investigate, and offer advice on the operations of offices and facilities in the county. (For example, the grand jury may be called upon to inspect and evaluate the conditions and operations of the county jail.) The report of the grand jury's investigation is called a **general presentment**, and it summarizes its findings and suggests improvements.

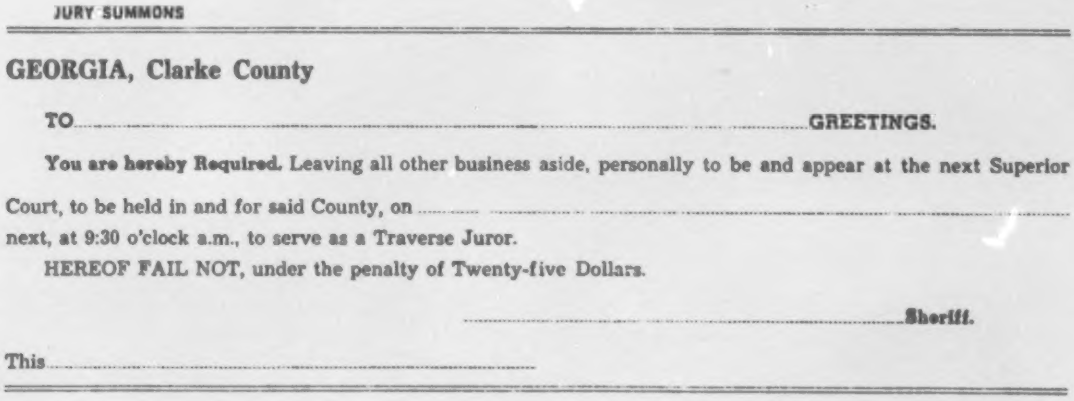
In many counties it can appoint the members of the county school board and the county board of health. In addition, the grand jury may investigate charges of fraud in elections, charges of bribery of public officials, or charges of violations of liquor laws.

Trial Jury

The trial jury is also called the "traverse jury" or the "petit jury." It has twelve members, except in civil cases where the plaintiff wants less than $5,000 from the defendant, in which case only six jury members are required.

In a case where the individual has been accused of a crime by indictment or accusation, the trial jury hears the evidence to decide whether he or she is guilty. Trial juries may also hear civil cases where a jury has been requested by either the plaintiff or defendant. A new trial jury is selected for each case requiring a jury trial.

Sent by mail to a registered voter in Clarke County requiring that the individual appear in court to serve on a trial (traverse) jury.



JURY SUMMONS

GEORGIA, Clarke County

TO..GREETINGS.

You are hereby Required. Leaving all other business aside, personally to be and appear at the next Superior Court, to be held in and for said County, on .... next, at 9:30 o'clock a.m., to serve as a Traverse Juror.

HEREOF FAIL NOT, under the penalty of Twenty-five Dollars.

....Sheriff.

This..

How are Jurors Chosen?

Each county in Georgia has a six-member **board of jury commissioners** which is appointed for six years by the superior court judge. The commissioners draw names of potential jurors from the county list of registered voters. These names are placed on slips of paper and put in a sealed box. In open court, the judge randomly draws from the box the names of those who are to be summoned for jury service. For each name drawn, a formal summons is prepared and delivered by the county sheriff's office.

The list of potential jurors is revised every two years. After a voter has served as juror, he is not formally called again to that court for several years.

The Clerk of the Superior Court

The clerk keeps records of the court's actions. This is one of the important elected officials discussed in Chapter Two, and you will recall that he/she has responsibilities regarding the court calendar, the list of jurors' names, the issuing of subpoenas, and the official recording of court decisions.

Other Court Personnel

Other officials or workers who serve the superior court are:

- The bailiff–who assists the judge in maintaining order in the courtroom, aids trial and grand juries in carrying out their duties, and ushers the witnesses to and from the witness stand.
- The court reporter– who takes complete notes of the proceedings of cases tried in superior court.
- Assistants to the district attorney.
- Probation officers–who check on persons put on probation by the court.
- Court service workers who supervise delinquent children.
- Secretaries, and in a few counties, law clerks and court administrators.

Where Cases Can Be Appealed

If one of the parties to a case which has been decided in superior court feels that there was a legal error made in the trial or decision, then he or she may request a review of the case in a higher court. This request is called an **appeal**.

Most appeals from superior court are taken to the Georgia Court of Appeals. (See diagram of Georgia courts on page 65.) This court has nine judges who are elected by the voters of the state. It can hear only appealed

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Some Rules of Conduct
for Trial (Traverse) Jurors
During A Trial

Jurors must refrain from any activity which might bias them toward one party or the other. They are to make every effort to keep an open mind during the trial. Therefore, jurors must not talk about the case with each other or with outside people. Also, jurors are not supposed to listen to radio or television accounts of the trial or read any news articles about the trial.

Jurors must select from amongst themselves a person to serve as the *foreman* (chairman) of the jury. They should try to select someone who is knowledgeable and who is likely to have the respect of other jurors. The foreman conducts the discussion and should keep it orderly and allow views to be stated by both sides. The foreman also conducts the taking of ballots and signs the written verdict.

Secrecy must be maintained in regard to what is discussed in the jury room.

A unanimous verdict is required by law in Georgia. This requires a thorough discussion of the case and the eventual change of viewpoint by some jurors. If a unanimous decision cannot be reached the result is known as a "hung jury" and the case may have to be retried.

The judge gives the jury instructions and explains the issue or questions to be decided. The judge explains the law which is involved in the case, and jurors then attempt to apply the law to the facts presented in court. Jurors are expected to learn the *law* of the case from the judge rather than from the way *they* think the law ought to be or the way trial lawyers view it.

–These general guidelines are drawn from "A Manual for Jurors in Georgia," prepared by the Younger Lawyers Section of the State Bar of Georgia.

cases, and therefore, has only "appellate jurisdiction" and no "original jurisdiction" (authority to hear cases first). This court hears all cases which by law do not have to be appealed to the Georgia Supreme Court. Cases that must be appealed to the supreme court involve interpretation of the Georgia or U.S. Constitutions, title to land, equity, interpretation of wills, divorce, felonies punishable by death, and certain others. Decisions of the Georgia Court of Appeals may be further appealed to the Georgia Supreme Court.

The Georgia Supreme Court, which also has only appellate jurisdiction, is a seven-member court elected by the voters of the state. It is the highest court in the state in that it has the final authority in all legal controversies in Georgia except those involving federal constitutional questions. These ultimately may be appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States.

How Superior Courts Are Funded

The cost of superior court sessions are partly funded by the state, which pays the salaries and travel expenses of the judges, district attorneys, probation officers, and court service workers. The county pays the expenses of maintaining the courtroom and the salary and office expenses of the clerk of the superior court, if the clerk is not paid by fees collected for services rendered. Except for a secretary for each superior court judge and for the district attorney, who are paid by the state, other court employees are paid entirely by the county.

OTHER COURTS SERVING COUNTIES

State Courts

Many counties have a state court: the State Court of Hall County, the State Court of Houston County, and the State Court of Bibb County are three examples. These courts may try all types of civil cases and misdemeanor criminal cases, but not felonies. The accused does not have the right to indictment by grand jury in this court.

Justice of the Peace Courts

Most counties have several justice of the peace courts, since each county is divided into militia districts, and each district is required to have a justice of the peace. However, in recent years the state legislature has abolished a number of these courts and replaced them with other types of local courts such as a magistrate's court. Justice of the peace courts have jurisdiction in civil cases where the damages in question are not more than $200.

Juvenile Courts

Juvenile courts have legal authority over young people under seventeen who violate the law or who are found to be unmanageable by parents or authorities because of such actions as violating school attendance laws, running away from home, or getting involved in drinking or drugs. The juvenile court is meant to serve as a kind of legal guide or guardian for young people in trouble. It recognizes that juveniles do not have the mature judgment of adults, and therefore should be given special consideration.

Juvenile case proceedings are relatively informal and private. Even in the case of a serious crime, a young person will usually have a hearing before the juvenile court judge rather than a regular trial before a jury. A juvenile court handling the case of a delinquent, dependent, neglected or unmanageable young person may continue its supervision over him or her until he or she becomes twenty-one years old.

A juvenile court officer supervises a young person on probation.

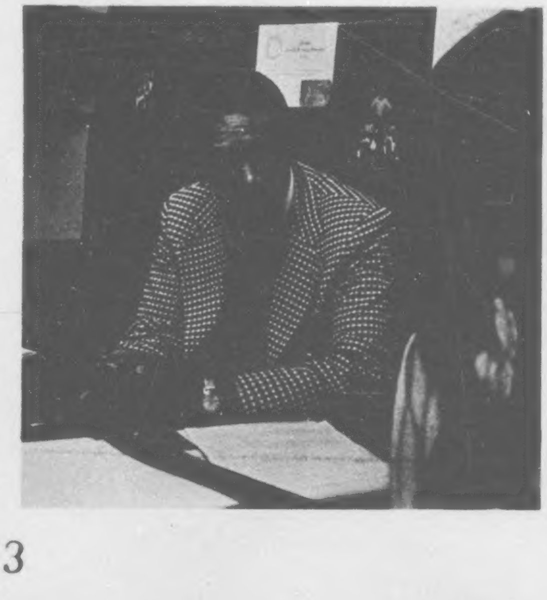
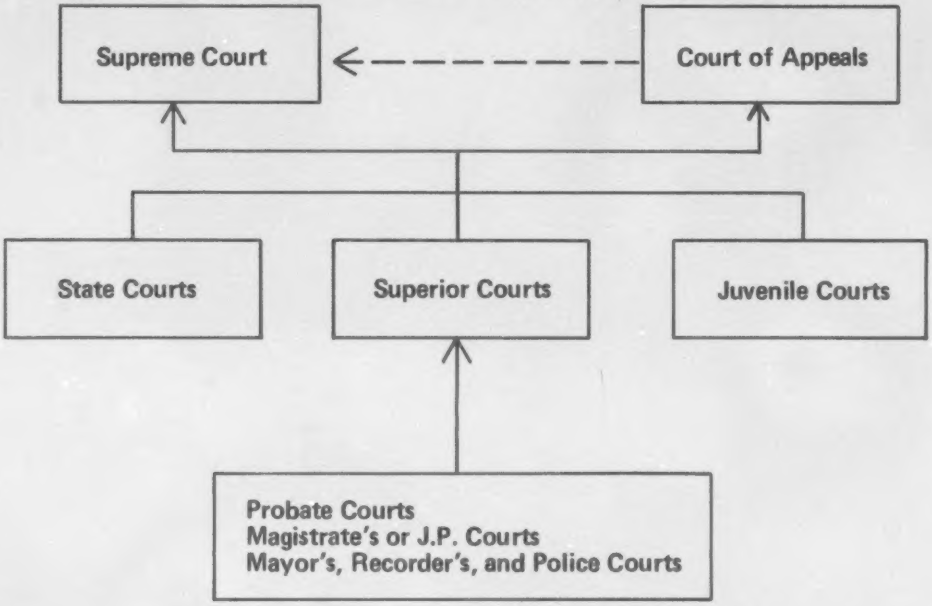


FIGURE 4

GENERAL DIAGRAM OF GEORGIA COURTS

Arrows Show Routes of Appeal



The State Legislature has established separate juvenile courts in counties with 50,000 population or more. In less populated counties, a separate juvenile court can be created upon recommendation of the grand jury. The juvenile court judge is appointed by the superior court judge or judges of the county. If a juvenile court has not been established in the county, then a superior court judge hears juvenile cases in a special court session.

IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD A LAWYER?

You may wonder how an accused person who is too poor to be able to pay for the services of a lawyer can effectively defend himself in court.

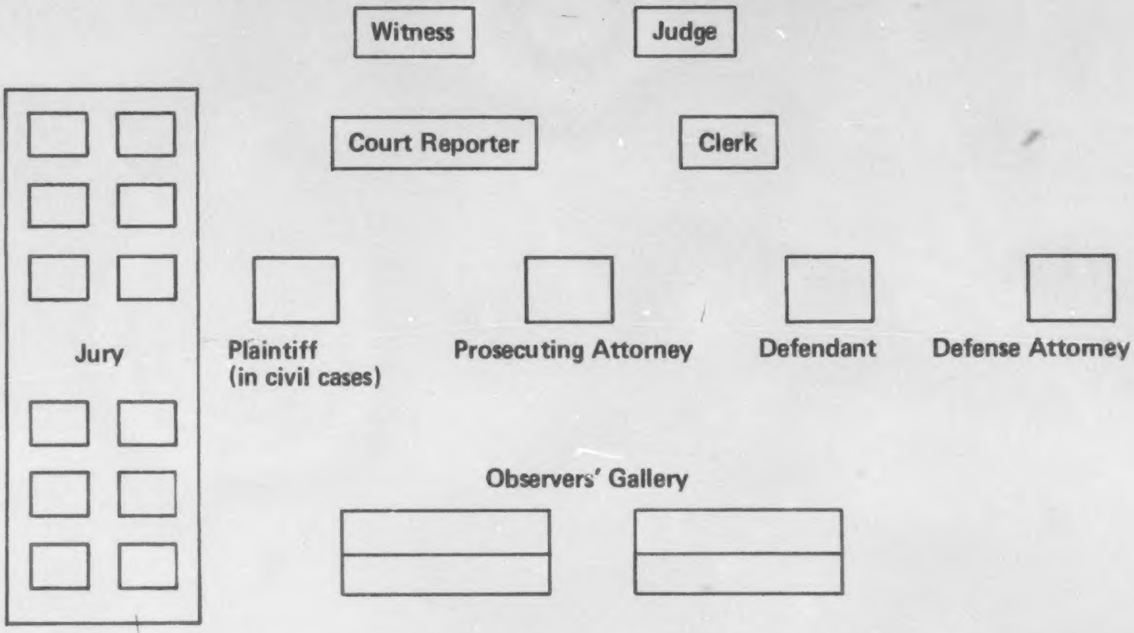
In a criminal case if the accused person is "indigent" (too poor to hire a lawyer without suffering hardships) and if the penalty for the crime could require imprisonment, then, according to Georgia laws, a defense lawyer must be provided for that defendant by the court.

State law makes it possible for a superior court to arrange for legal assistance to criminally accused indigent persons in one of these ways:

1. The superior court may assign attorneys in the county to the indigent defense cases. Under this arrangement, the judge sets the limits on compensation to be paid to the attorneys by the county government and approves any payment made.
2. If there is a non-profit legal aid organization in the county, the court may arrange for the county government to pay it (an amount equal to that given an individual lawyer) on an individual case basis. Or the county commissioners may contract annually with a legal aid organization for assistance to indigent persons.
3. The superior court of the county, with the approval of the county commissioners, may establish the

FIGURE 5

DIAGRAM OF A CONVENTIONAL COURTROOM



appointed office of **public defender** to provide criminal legal defense for indigent persons. The public defender is appointed by the superior court on a fulltime or part-time basis for a two-year term. He or she must be licensed to practice law and competent to defend a person accused of a crime. If the court and county commissioners approve, one or more assistant public defenders may be appointed by the public defender.

The funds which pay any of these arrangements come from court operation funds in each county.

The superior court decides who should receive publicly funded legal defense assistance. It considers such factors as income, property owned, expenses, money owed, and the number and age of persons supported by the accused. The superior court may set indigency standards for all courts of the county.

CASE STUDY

WHAT HAPPENS IN A CRIMINAL CASE?

What happens to a person who is involved in a court case? How does the process of justice actually work? To find out, let's trace a criminal case coming before the superior court.

Assume that a young man named Eddie is suspected of committing a felony (not punishable by death) in a county area entirely under the jurisdiction of county officials. Assume that Eddie is twenty years old and lives in the county where the crime was committed. The following steps briefly and generally describe the procedures in a felony case involving a person seventeen or over who no longer comes within the jurisdiction of the juvenile court.

1) Investigation The sheriff's department or the county police will have investigated the felony and gathered enough evidence to determine that Eddie is a suspect.

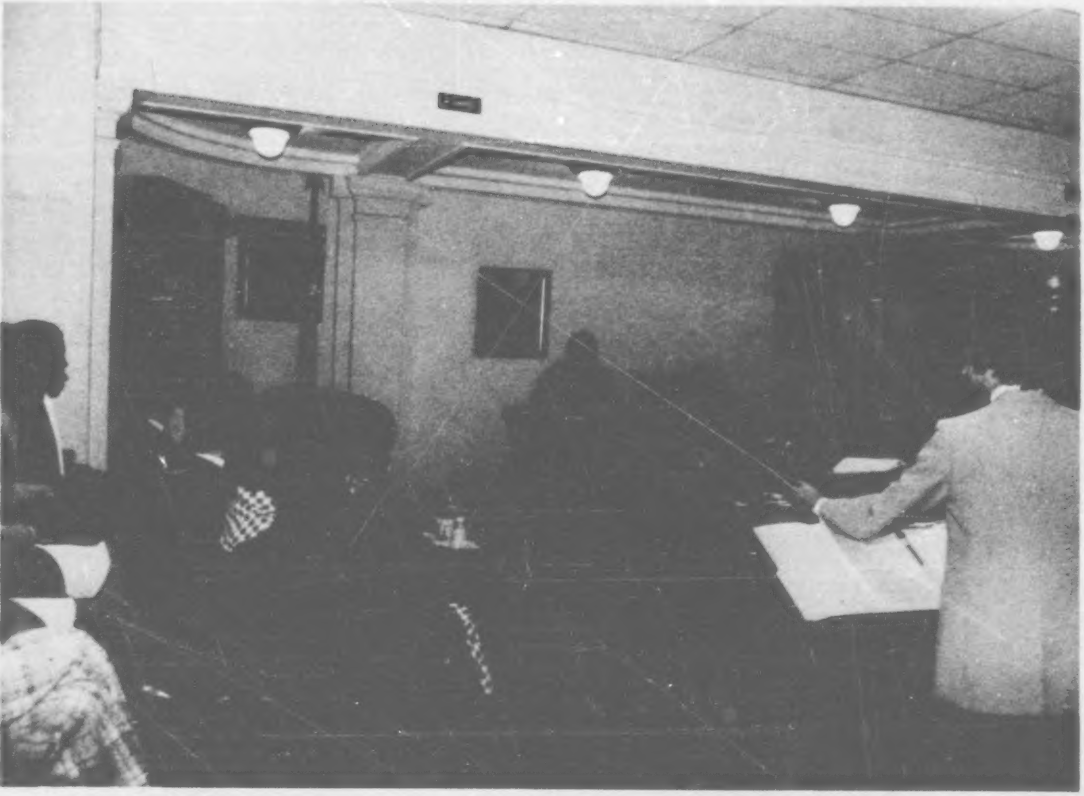
2) Arrest Eddie, if he is in the county, will be arrested and warned of his constitutional rights by the sheriff's department or county police, and taken into custody. If Eddie has left the county where the crime was committed, then law enforcement officials will attempt to trace his whereabouts and have him arrested by officials in that area and transferred back to where the crime was committed.

3) Booking When Eddie is taken into custody by the sheriff's or county police department, he will be "booked"–that is, an official record will be made of the arrest. Then he will be placed in the county jail if an "initial appearance" cannot be arranged.

4) Initial Appearance Within seventy-two hours, if arrested with a warrant, or within forty-eight hours if arrested without a warrant, Eddie will be taken before a justice of the peace or other judge for an initial appearance. There Eddie will be further informed of his constitutional rights and instructed to obtain an attorney, or he may request to have one appointed by the superior court. Afterwards, Eddie will be returned to jail, or released upon posting a bail bond and promising that he will appear at the proper time for a "preliminary hearing." If he gives up his right to a preliminary hearing, he will have to post bond and promise to appear at trial before the superior court. (If Eddie were under seventeen years of age, his case would be sent directly to the county juvenile court.)

5) Preliminary Hearing

When the preliminary hearing is held, a justice of the peace or other judge will determine whether there is sufficient reason to suspect that Eddie is guilty of committing the crime and, therefore, must be tried before the superior court. If he decides Eddie should be tried, he will be returned to jail or released upon posting a bail bond and promising that he will appear at the proper time for trial in the superior court. However, if after the hearing, the judge determines that there is not sufficient reason to suspect that Eddie is guilty, he will be released and his case will be dismissed.



6) Indictment or Accusation

If Eddie's case is sent to the superior court for trial, the district attorney decides whether to prosecute the case or request that the superior court dismiss the case. If the district attorney decides to prosecute, he will present evidence in an effort to obtain an indictment from the grand jury. If Eddie gives up his right to indictment, the district attorney will proceed by filing a "prosecutor's accusation."

7) Arraignment

After indictment or accusation, Eddie, with his lawyer, will go before the superior court on a day set by the court to "plead" (or state) whether he is "guilty" or "not guilty" of the crime with which he has been charged. If Eddie pleads "not guilty," a trial date will be set by the court. If he pleads guilty he will be sentenced by the judge.

8) Trial

The trial is held before a judge and most likely a twelve-member trial jury to determine whether to convict Eddie. The district attorney will "prosecute" (attempt to prove the guilt of the accused) based on the evidence presented. Eddie's lawyer will argue in Eddie's defense. Both sides will bring in witnesses to testify, and both sides will cross-examine the other's witnesses.

Throughout the trial, the judge will advise and make decisions on the law and procedural rules which apply to the case and will make sure that these are followed. The jury will determine which of the statements presented by witnesses and attorneys are acceptable as facts in the case.

9) Verdict

At the completion of the trial, the jury will decide whether Eddie is guilty or should be acquitted. A unanimous vote of the jury will be required to declare the accused "guilty." Unlike some states, in Georgia, if the full jury does not agree on his guilt, Eddie will not be convicted. If the jury cannot agree, a "mistrial" will be declared by the judge. In our system of legal justice, only a person who is formally convicted is considered guilty and punishable for the crime.

10) Sentencing

If Eddie is found guilty, he will be sentenced by the judge based on the range of punishments prescribed for that felony by state law. Depending on the seriousness of the crime, he may be sentenced to imprisonment in a state prison, or placed on probation, or given a suspended sentence.

11) Appeal

If Eddie and his lawyer determine the court procedures or the laws have not been fairly applied in his case, then they will appeal Eddie's case to either the Georgia Supreme Court or Court of Appeals. The court will review the appeal and either reverse or uphold the superior court decision.

DISCUSSION

1. From the chart on page 60, determine the superior court district in which your county is located and the number of judges assigned to it. Then, find out
   a) the name(s) of the superior court judge(s), and
   b) the next date on which superior court will be held in your county. (The clerk of the superior court should be able to provide this information.)

2. In addition to the superior court, does your county have
   a) a juvenile court?
   b) a state court?
   c) justice of the peace courts?
   d) a magistrate's court?

3. The privilege of being tried by a jury of fellow citizens dates back about seven centuries. In an encyclopedia or other reference book, look up the origin of the right to trial by jury. What famous English document first provided this right? How did it become part of the American system of justice and therefore Georgia law?

4. Read your local newspaper for news stories about cases being tried in superior court or juvenile court. Clip them from the paper and contribute them to a class bulletin board, separating civil and criminal cases.

5. Read the following case items. Based on what you have read in this chapter, decide whether each incident would result in a **civil** or a **criminal** case.
   a) Patrolmen using radar speed-test equipment stopped John and accused him of traveling in an auto at eighty miles per hour in a fifty-five mile per hour zone.
   b) When police sirens sought to halt John, he hit the brake of his car to attempt a quick stop and skidded off the road into the back of Mr. Hall's parked car. Mr. Hall has brought charges against John for heavy damages to his car.
   c) Barbara was shopping in a department store where a large, new display window was being installed. As she was leaving the store, a section of the window frame broke off and fell, hitting her. Her right shoulder, right arm, and neck were seriously injured. She sued the store owners for negligence resulting in accidental injury.
   d) Harry had a long-time grudge against George, and Harry became very jealous when George bought a new lakefront cabin. One winter night, when he thought the lake area was deserted, Harry set fire to George's cabin. A sheriff's deputy caught him as he left the scene of the burning cabin.

6. Based on the information in this chapter, attempt to determine whether each of the following criminal cases is an example of a **misdemeanor** or a **felony**:
   a) A college student sold a supply of heroin to two other students for $500. He was picked up by a county police officer posing as a student. The arrested youth was found to be carrying quantities of other kinds of drugs in addition to heroin.
   b) A young woman driving her car in a residential area failed to stop for a red light. She was halted by a county police officer and given a traffic violation ticket.
   c) Police received a report that a man shopping in a supermarket had a pistol hidden inside his coat. Police apprehended the man and found that he was hiding a pistol and that he did not have a permit to carry the weapon.

7. The procedures in a criminal case are outlined in this chapter. Interview a local lawyer who practices before the superior court and prepare an outline of procedures in a **civil case**. How do these procedures differ from those in a criminal case?

CHAPTER 5

CHANGING POPULATIONS

County government is greatly influenced by population changes. A county may have to expand its staff and offices to provide greater services if more and more people are moving into the county. Or, a county may have to cut back its services and reduce its programs if large numbers of people are leaving the area.

In the last twenty-five years, the number of people residing in Georgia has increased by over one million. The *rate* of population growth is increasing also. In the period from 1950 to 1960, the number of people in the state increased by 499,000 or 14½%. From 1960 to 1970, the rate of increase was about 16½%. In that ten-year period the population grew from 3,943,116 to 4,589,575–a gain of approximately 650,000 people.

This population growth has not been evenly distributed over the 159 counties, however. Some counties have had a great influx of inhabitants and continue to grow rapidly today. Other counties have lost many people. And some other counties have remained about the same.

When Populations Decrease

In counties where the population is decreasing, people are likely to see fewer homes being built around them, a decline in the number of factories and mills, and a decrease in the number of service businesses, such as gas stations and dry cleaners. Individuals and whole families will gradually move away. Some older homes may be boarded up or torn down. Some stores and restaurants will close. As the demand for property in the area decreases, property values are likely to decrease also.

With fewer people there will be fewer cars. If there is public transportation, such as a bus service, it will have fewer customers and eventually service will be curtailed or closed down. Probably the enrollment in the schools will decrease. Some government services may be curtailed, but certain basic services, such as garbage disposal, road maintenance, and sewage disposal, will have to be continued for the remaining residents even though there will be less tax money.

When Areas Grow Rapidly

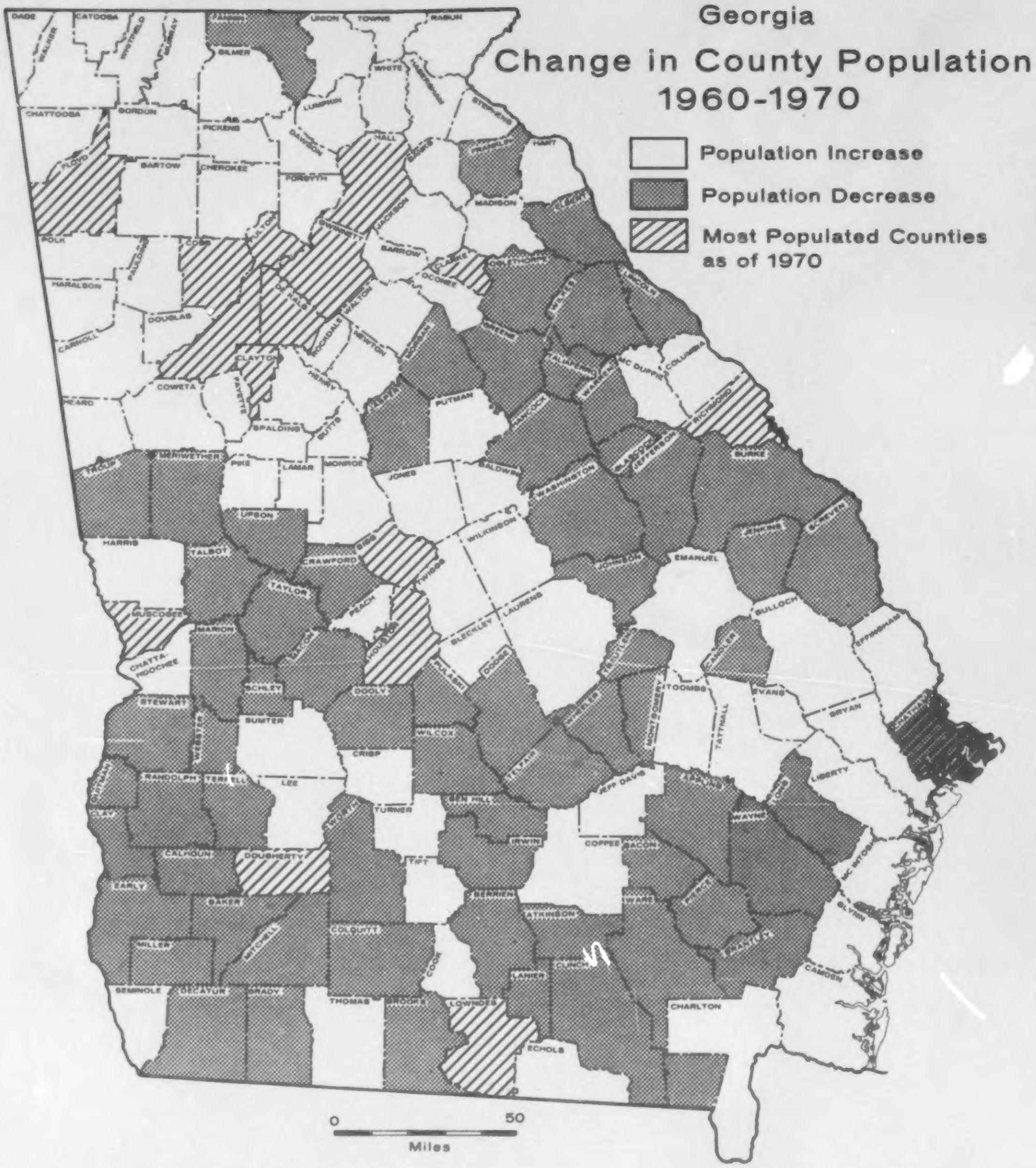
People living in areas where the population is growing rapidly will observe quite a different scene. Many new homes will be under construction. Old homes which had been closed down will be renovated for use again. Additional shopping centers and new business firms will be opened. The number of land sales and the number of business firms which buy and sell property will increase. As the demand for land and homes increases, property values will go up. There will be more cars and new streets and roads. At the same time there will be increases in the demands and needs for government services, such as police protection, road maintenance, water supply, public transportation, and garbage disposal. As the demands on government increase, so will the taxes that support expanding government operations.

Is Your County Growing?

Locate your county on the map on the next page. Having found the county in which you live, you can see if it is located in an area which is increasing or decreasing in population. What counties surround your county? Do you see any signs of population growth or of population decline in the area?

Look over Table 7. You will find that the seven largest counties (with populations over 100,000) grew an average of 21.3% in ten years. Appendix A (pages 105-107) will show you that the seven largest counties are Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Chatham, Muscogee,

MAP 4



Georgia

Change in County Population 1960-1970

Source: Based on U. S. Census figures

TABLE 7

GEORGIA COUNTIES BY POPULATION SIZE GROUPS (1960 AND 1970)

	Population Size Groupings					
1960 Statistics	**All**	**Over 100,000**	**50,000-99,999**	**25,000-49,999**	**10,000-24,999**	**Less Than 10,000**
Number of Counties	159	7	2	21	64	65
% of Counties	100	4.4	1.3	13.2	40.3	40.9
Population	3,943,116	1,551,054	144,810	801,144	1,008,694	437,414
% of Total Population	100	39.3	3.7	20.3	25.6	11.1
1970 Statistics						
Number of Counties	159	7	11	19	60	62
% of Counties	100	4.4	6.9	11.9	37.7	39.1
Population	4,589,575	1,880,771	732,718	617,119	951,409	407,558
% of Total Population	100	41.0	16.0	13.4	20.7	8.9
% Population Change 1960-1970	**+16.4**	**+21.3**	**+406.0**	**-23.0**	**-5.7**	**-6.8**
Total Area—1970						
Square Miles*	58,274	2,375	3,976	8,033	23,740	20,150
% of Square Miles	100	4.1	6.8	13.8	40.7	34.6

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce/Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population—Georgia.*

*The actual dry land area is 58,073, as 201 square miles are covered by water.

Richmond, and Bibb. The growth of each of these counties has been tied to the growth of an important Georgia city. Can you name that city in each county?

Referring back to Table 7, you will see that the counties in the second largest population group (50,000 to 99,999) have shown a phenomenal average population growth rate of 406% or four times the 1960 population! The number of counties in this group grew from two to eleven in ten years. Of these eleven counties (numbered 8 through 18 in Appendix A), Clayton County had the largest increase. In the years between 1960 and 1970, the population of Clayton County more than doubled. Locate Clayton County on Map 4 and then on a highway map of Georgia. Is there a large city in Clayton County? What factors might have contributed to its rapid growth?

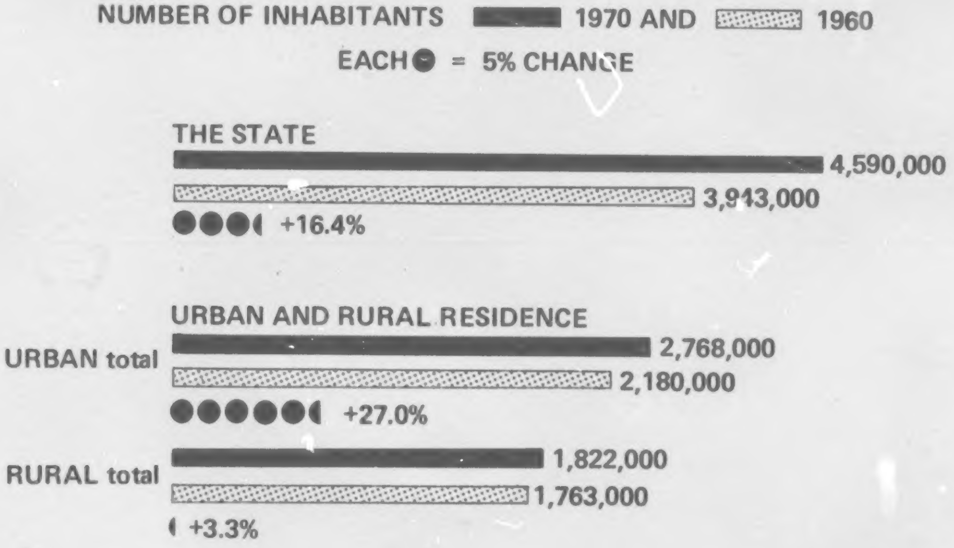
Counties such as Gwinnett, Douglas, and Chattahoochee experienced great influxes of population in the 1960s, and this growth is apparently continuing in the 1970s. Find each of these counties on Map 4. Then, using a road map, try to determine if their location in relationship to major highways may be a possible reason for growth.

Many Georgia counties lost population from 1960 to 1970. Approximately 40% of Georgia's 159 counties had a decline in number of inhabitants. On Table 7 and in Appendix A, note the drop in population in the middle-sized counties (25,000–49,999) and in the smaller counties (under 25,000). The greatest losses of population occurred in Taliaferro, Webster, and Clay Counties.

Map 4 clearly indicates those counties which have few people. Rural counties which

FIGURE 6

POPULATION CHANGE IN GEORGIA, 1960-1970



Where has the greatest population growth taken place in Georgia—in urban counties or rural counties? What might be some of the reasons why people would move from one area of the state to another?

are sparsely populated still cover over one-third of the state of Georgia.

A Closer Look at Counties Losing Population

An article written for an Atlanta newspaper in 1971 vividly described what it was like in several communities of Georgia which had been losing population as people moved from rural to urban areas. As you read the following excerpts from that article, you may be able to picture the closed down mills, the boarded up county stores, and the ghost towns which the author describes. Note the various reasons given for why people moved away from these communities.

THE MIGRATION*

**John Pennington,* THE ATLANTA JOURNAL AND CONSTITUTION, *December 5, 1971.*

. . . In the last ten-year census period, 65 of Georgia's 159 counties lost population while the state as a whole was experiencing a sprightly increase. The four counties out of ten that lost have something in common; they are rural and generally not in good economic health. People moved on to better jobs. Eleven urbanized counties showed a dramatic gain in population, ranging from 40 to 111.5 percent. That's where the people went.

The 1970 census discloses that of Georgia's 600 or so incorporated cities, towns, and unincorporated places with more than 1,000 population, 173 showed a decline. Of these, ten dropped dramatically by nearly half or more. The decreases ranged from 40.3 percent to 89.5 percent, an indication, it would seem, that the towns are dying. For various reasons, life is passing them by.

A visit to seven of the ten revealed that figures don't always prove what they seem to. Several actually are thriving, census notwithstanding, while others show only a faint breath of life. A discussion with two professors at the University of Georgia who have made studies of dead and dying towns points up some of the reasons why some fall into decline.

All towns begin small, with just a few people. Some flourish, some fail and fade into obscurity. Some do both–flourish and then fade. At any given moment, a number of towns are dying.

Dr. Louis DeVorsey and Dr. James Fisher, professors of geography at the university, recently took some of their students on a weekend field trip for a study of towns in the Athens area–some of them thriving, some dying, some ghost towns already. They had the students interview townfolk, looking for the factors that spell the difference between death and dynamism. One of the things noticed by the students, Dr. DeVorsey says, was the number of old people in most of the towns. The young had moved on, looking for "richer ground."

Odessadale. In 1960, this little town in **Meriwether County** in west Georgia had a population of 142. Already it was declining. The trains didn't stop there anymore. The fields were no longer being farmed and the young folks, as James Partridge was pointing out, when they reached school age, "go and keep a-goin'." The town is so obscure that one must persevere to find it. It is off the main highway and there is no marker to point the way. A misspelled church sign is the only clue. The road is paved into the town, but it gives way to dirt beyond. There are a few houses empty, a few houses lived in. All the stores are closed. The latest census tells the story. The population is now 70, down 50.7 percent. One of every two inhabitants has gone in the last 10 years. . . .

White Sulphur Springs, also in **Meriwether County**, was even more difficult to find. It appears on the state road map, in the southwest corner of the county, on Georgia Highway 18. I drove past the point on the map and didn't see a town, then went back twice. Still I saw no town that could have had a population of 156 a decade ago.

An old man was alone at the edge of a nearby cotton field, a cotton sack hanging from his shoulder, so I asked directions.

"It's back down the road there, where those houses are," he said. The old man turned away, then looked back again. "Ain't nothing going on there now," he added.

He was right. Nothing going on there now. A closer inspection revealed a row of houses on the west side of the highway, most of them set back 50 yards or so from the road. But they were empty and overgrown with vines and grasses, bushes and trees. Apparently a town once had thrived at this place, but now there was no one to be found, nobody to ask about it. A new house down the street was occupied, but nobody answered a knock on the door.

A little farther down the highway, what appeared to be an abandoned garage set on the edge of a field strewn with the rusting bodies of old automobiles. A car graveyard.

White Sulphur Springs once had been an incorporated town, with a 1960 population of 156 which had dwindled to 38 in 1970, a decline of 75.6 percent. Three of every four had gone. By late 1971, the latest count seemed exaggerated. But maybe the limits of the community stretched on beyond the car graveyard to include more distant houses. Whatever the limits, the town is one of those where some inhabitants have looked away and moved along, its empty houses testimony to what used to be.

Bluffton. This **Clay County** town sits on U.S. Highway 27 between Blakely and Cuthbert in southwest Georgia. There is no numbered crossing route; there is no railroad. In 1950 the population was 244. In 1960 it was 176. In 1970 the number of inhabitants was dwindled to 105.

Of those inhabitants remaining, none was in sight as I drove into town. Every store was closed and falling into disrepair. So were a number of dwellings along the way. One sign of new life stood out from all else–a recently built red brick post office with the U.S. flag hanging out front.

"No industry here is the main thing," said Mrs. Sarah Cain, postal clerk in charge of the post office. "When the young go off to college, they get work away from here. There's not enough here to entice them back. If we could get some industry here, they could come back."

Mrs. Cain said her two daughters were among those who had left. After finishing school, they found jobs in Atlanta.

"Twenty-seven years ago," Mrs. Cain said, "when I got married and came here from Blakely, there were twelve or thirteen businesses in town. We had a drugstore, a good hardware store, several grocery stores, two doctors. There's not one store open now. A man put one in this spring. He's closed already. People do their shopping at Blakely and Fort Gaines."

Boykin. A bit further south, in **Miller County**, Boykin sits alongside U.S. 27 and the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad. The indicated drop here in the decade of the Sixties is spectacular: from 601 to 63, a loss of almost 9 of 10 inhabitants.

Strange figures, for the town does not appear deserted. Two of the three stores are closed, but the third appears to thrive. There are no empty houses evident, and the community looks painted, well-kept, and lived in.

Loy (Buck) Andrews, owner of the surviving store, said, "There's never been 600 people living there. The population has always been about the same as it is now. A hundred would probably cover those that live here."

Otis McVey, who moved to Boykin in 1944, figured the 1960 census might have counted a number of migrant workers who were in Boykin for a time. "I don't know," he said. "There used to be a world of Negroes here before the work give out. Used to be a big sawmill and paperwood business." He waved his arm toward an open field across the highway and past the railroad. "Used to be wood stacked out there as far as you could see. There was a bus operating three times a day up and down that road over there, hauling people to the mill. But those things closed down and all those people had to go. . . ."

The interview did not fully solve the mystery of the dramatic census figures. But a check on population ten years further back, to 1950, showed a county of 120 then, nearly twice the present figure, showing a steady decline over the longer period despite any transient migrant boom.

Coleman's Lake. This is one of the towns whose census figure is misleading. In the first place, it is not a town in the truest sense of the word, although it is incorporated and has been since some time in the 1950s. Secondly, it is growing instead of declining.

Basically, Coleman's Lake is a club and campground owned by brothers Heyward and O. T. Fulghum. More than a town, Coleman's Lake is a picturesque, moss-draped retreat from the outside world. It sits alongside the lake for which it is named, and the lake is backwater from the Ogeechee River in east Georgia. There are cottages and camper hookups, a skating rink, picnic areas, a store and recreation room, and a restuarant. Big, old trees–cypress, oak, pine, hickory–cover the area.

The latest census indicated a 50 percent drop in population at Coleman's Lake–from 34 in 1960 to 17.

"Since the census was taken, we've started growing again." Heyward Fulghum said. "I can count them. . . ." He concentrated for a moment, took inventory of the faces that crossed his mind. "The population is 33 now. Eight families."

Graysville. The 1970 census indicates that this little town, nestled in a **Catoosa County** valley almost on the Tennessee line, has lost 42 percent of its population in 10 years, from 138 to 80.

Mrs. Laura Swanson, postmaster for twenty-four years, said she had no idea why the population was down. "The young 'uns marry and move out," she said. "They get a job and move off to where they work."

What was the town like twenty years ago? "I can't tell any difference," she said. "The older ones die out and the younger ones leave. That's all I can tell you."

Down the street in the town's general store, W. E. Brown talked as he waited on customers. "I don't see any change at all," he said. "I been here fifty years. If anything, we're growing. They're building new houses everywhere around here."

A drive through the little town, which sits in a valley alongside the road and a creek and railroad track, reveals no signs of diminishing fortunes. Several new houses have been built, and only a couple of empty ones are to be seen. At the edge of the creek nearby, a deserted but picturesque old grist mill reminds of an industry no longer needed. Nearby, a lady wearing a big floppy bonnet works in a garden. The town is neat and attractive . . .

What are the causes of major population changes? Dr. Louis DeVorsey and Dr. James Fisher both are interested in the subject, and Dr. Fisher has done extensive research on it in connection with his doctorate.

"All sorts of entirely human decisions can be involved in population changes," Dr. DeVorsey said. "A group of people–or an individual–can make up their minds that something is going to happen, and then make it happen. In one town we visited near here, we found that one citizen–by the force of his personality–had got things to happening and practically kept the town alive."

The big factor in population loss, however, seems to have been the trend away from agriculture and to mechanization.

"Many of the towns we look at," Dr. Fisher said, "the small towns, the lower order trade centers, once served some basic needs for the rural population surrounding them. Back in the 1920s the rural population was greater, making these areas more significant.

"But since then, several things have happened. We have seen a decline in rural population because of the boll weevil and the impact of mechanization. People were drawn to larger counties.

"Rural population is off one-half since the 1920s. So the market for the services in the lower order trade centers disappeared. There aren't as many people to buy the goods and services.

"We can visit a town that once had a bank, a doctor, dentist, hotel, hardware store. . .and now there's nothing."

"Changes in technology, in transportation, have affected the population of towns," Dr. DeVorsey said. "If a town was bypassed by the railroad, it had little chance to grow. Interstate highways affect growth. Towns that have access to the interstate system are favored over those that are bypassed.

"There have been technological changes in terms of the need for towns. As roads have been improved, the farmer can move a greater distance more easily. Consequently, he goes to a larger town for a greater variety of goods and services. The little town gets bypassed."

"The bigger city does attract," said Dr. Fisher. "There's more excitement, alternative employment opportunities. The bigger town is a more attractive place to live."

"Our students on field trips have asked children in small towns where they want to live when they grow up," Dr. DeVorsey said. "The overwhelming proportion say they want to go to Atlanta, to New Orleans, to the bigger cities."

"There is a surprising number of ghost towns in Georgia now," Dr. Fisher said. "Dead towns, with nothing left. . . ."

This news article gives us some insight into the causes for population shifts and changes among Georgia's counties. Several things seem to affect whether people move or stay where they are.

The availability of jobs appears crucial to stability and growth. The presence of a factory, mill, or high-demand commercial agricultural crop in the county offers employment and income to those who live there, and it may attract additional people as well.

Transportation is also revealed as an important factor. Bus service, train service, good roads, and/or airports may attract industry and jobs, or they may attract homeowners who travel to jobs and recreation in other communities.

Technology also influences population. The introduction of machinery which can do the work of numbers of laborers reduces the numbers of jobs in agriculture or manufacturing.

However, as was pointed out in the article, the human factor should not be forgotten. Family ties and tradition, vigorous community leadership, and personal commitments may also make a difference in whether people stay in one area or go elsewhere.

Another Perspective

The following article gives us a closeup of a county under the pressure of rapid growth. Written in 1975, the article concerns Liberty County in southeast Georgia. It describes the beginnings of a population explosion and business boom in the county seat and surrounding area. Find Liberty County on the map and read this article to find out why this "sleepy" coastal county is undergoing a rapid increase in population.

BOOM AND GROWTH IN LIBERTY COUNTY*

**From "Jolt to Awaken Sleepy Town?" by Ron Taylor,* THE ATLANTA JOURNAL AND CONSTITUTION, *July 6, 1975.*

Locals concede their town is sleepy. Some like it but a lot of people seem quite excited about what is about to happen.

Hinesville is about to grow–phenomenally so, it would seem. Mayor Carl Dykes predicts the town of less than 7,000 now will be a town of 20,000 within five years. That likely is a conservative estimate.

At least 40,000 people are expected to be drawn here within the next three years by the build-up of Ft. Stewart, which is within rifle range of the town that calls the courthouse square its business district, and most are likely to try to settle here.

Hinesville is far from isolated, although it may appear that way to outsiders. Savannah, a bustling enough city, is forty-five miles away. Jesup, a good-sized town, is twenty-five miles away. And one local insists that Liberty County, of which Hinesville is the county seat, has the prettiest beach.

Young residents, nonetheless, glow at

the talk of new restaurants, movie houses, motels, and recreational facilities.

But older people worry–some because of the memories of the "sin city" days of World War II, most because of fickle progress.

"It's like a rubber ball," says a realtor here. "It bounces only so high before it hits the dirt again."

So it has been with Ft. Stewart, the largest U.S. Army installation geographically east of the Mississippi, which fans out into tangled trees and swamplands just north of the last mobile home dealership in Hinesville.

Town residents are well aware the government giveth and the government taketh away, and that is what worries some of them.

Ft. Stewart is promising the town its biggest boom since World War II, but as one mobile home wholesaler puts it, "It is a boom town that isn't booming."

The reason, say some local leaders, is caution. There have been other booms, during World War II and Korea and Vietnam, and considerable fizzles in between that have left Hinesville all but economically destitute at times.

Although Ft. Stewart officers insist the plans to move a new army division into the post had been in the works for some time, locals praise Secretary of the Army Howard "Bo" Callaway, a Georgian, for the gift.

But Callaway is no longer Secretary of the Army, having resigned his post recently to be President Ford's campaign manager, and some Hinesville leaders worry that a new secretary might prefer to have their army division in his home state. Such are the realities of military politics.

Banks, therefore, are letting money go grudgingly, and much of the boom is paper –drawings of unfinanced projects and the traded paper of land dealings.

Meanwhile, soldiers are coming through at the rate of 100 a week, a number expected to escalate to 250 a week in a few weeks.

There is little more housing available. Some new arrivals are living in Statesboro, Brunswick, and Savannah, places as far as fifty miles from the post. Some have had to be put up in motels for a time until other housing could be found.

Ft. Stewart officials had projected the real housing crunch would come by mid-1976, but Don Smith, an off-post housing referral assistant, says he feels a possible crisis is "just over the hill."

"This month and next month," he says, "we expect a big influx. I don't know how we'll handle them."

Ft. Stewart is cranking up a $51 million building project that will add some 400 housing units at the installation, and is hoping for an additional $69 million appropriation for fiscal year 1976 to help provide 750 more housing units. But estimates are that there will be a "shortfall" of 2,000 housing units this year even with the construction of on-post housing.

A Hinesville banker estimates that 125-150 houses are under construction in the Hinesville area, nowhere near enough to meet the demand.

Housing is only one situation in which Hinesville and other affected communities are clearly ill-prepared to meet the Ft. Stewart build-up.

Liberty County School Supt. Edgar M. Edwards says he can't apply yet for federal funds that are available to communities near military posts for classroom construction and other assistance because he has no idea how many additional students the build-up will bring.

Besides, he says, there already is a backlog of applications for what little money is available nationally.

So far, the build-up is a numbers game with none of the numbers certain.

The 24th Infantry, a new version of the legendary "Victory" Divison of World War II and Korea, is expected to have 17,670 soldiers by June of 1978.

Estimates are that the troops will bring at least that many dependents–or about 17,000 or 18,000 additional bodies to be housed and possibly schooled.

Moreover, there will be civilian personnel, along with their dependents, coming to work at the post. All told, Ft. Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield, the base near Savannah which will be the home of the aviation side of the 24th Infantry, are expected to bring 60,000 people into the eight-county coastal area of Georgia by 1978.

While Hinesville is the area closest to the populated area of Ft. Stewart, the build-up will indeed affect the whole coastal region.

For that reason, the Coastal Area Planning and Development Commission recently undertook a study of what all the ramifications would be.

Besides looking at the obvious problems, like housing and schooling, researchers also are looking at the soil.

Long a woe to coastal development has been shallow soil, which often leaves developers striking only water.

The simple matter of setting up a sanitary landfill in Liberty County, one-third of which is covered by Ft. Stewart, has become a perplexing issue. Federal standards require at least a five-foot water table, but county planners can't seem to find an area with soil that thick.

The City of Hinesville is trying to get federal approval for a sewage project, but again there is the problem of soil as well as federal acceptance.

The county has tried to facilitate controlled development by joining with two adjacent counties in a massive zoning plan, but the city thus far has refused to participate in the zoning design . . .

Some oldtimers worry that the new build-up will bring back the sin city days, but Ft. Stewart officers insist that times have changed since the here-today-dead-tomorrow attitude of World War II troops.

And local government officials say business license controls are much tighter today.

Also, locals say they had no particular problems when Ft. Stewart had about 6,000 troops training here during the peak period of the Vietnam War.

Officers of Ft. Stewart are going to considerable lengths to reassure local citizens.

Brig. Gen. Donald E. Rosenblum, the post commander, says he makes frequent talks to civil and governmental groups in the surrounding communities, and a post representative often sits in on Hinesville City Council meetings to answer any questions about the post. . . .

Some residents of Liberty County foresee that Hinesville will become a **boom town** (a town which experiences rapid business and building growth as a result of rapid increases in employed population). How are the sharp increases in population and business likely to affect Liberty County's government?

Some problems are already visible. Schools, water supply, and garbage disposal must be improved to meet the needs of the growing population as soon as possible. Numerous other problems will arise as housing, transportation, and businesses increase.

In cases like Liberty County's where the population has increased in great numbers and rapidly, there are tremendous demands on all departments of county government. Government must attempt to raise the revenue needed to provide numerous additional services, and then, the county must expand its personnel and its operations in order to effectively provide these services.

Other counties have also experienced growth pressures. Counties such as Clayton, Cobb, and Gwinnett have had great increases in demands for water and sewer services, police protection, traffic control, provision of trial courts to hear civil and criminal cases, provision of jail facilities, land use planning and zoning, provision of school and educational materials, road building, road maintenance, registration of official documents, and numerous other governmental services of which the county is the basic provider.

As you can see, county governments must respond to meet the needs of changing population, whether that population is decreasing, remaining about the same, or growing rapidly.

DISCUSSION

1. Look over Table 7 and determine:
   a) What percent of Georgia's population lived in counties of 50,000 population and over in 1960? In 1970?
   b) By 1970 the population living in counties of less than 10,000 population made up what percent of the total population of Georgia? On what percent of the total land area did these people live?
   c) From Table 7, what generalizations can you make about the shifting population in Georgia counties? Are your generalizations supported by statements in the news stories excerpted in this chapter?
2. Look over Appendix A and answer the following:
   a) Look at the top seven counties on the table and on Map 4. Why do you suppose that three of these seven had less than a 6% increase in population from 1960, while two of these counties grew over 60%?
   b) If you live in one of these top seven counties, try to determine some causes of rapid growth by talking to county officials, local businessmen, and homebuilders. Also look through recent newspapers for information on county growth.
3. Obtain a highway map of Georgia which clearly shows the routes of interstate highways 75, 85 and 285. Pencil these highways on a Georgia map provided by your teacher, taking care to place the lines in the correct counties. Then look at Appendix A and check for population changes in each of the counties through which the highways pass. Do you think that the construction of the interstate highways in Georgia in the 1960s may have contributed to county growth? Explain.
4. According to the news story, "The Migration," what conditions are common to the Georgia counties which lost population in the years from 1960-1970?
5. Using the map at the front of the book, locate each county which you have read about in "The Migration." Then, using Appendix A, check the rate of population change in each county.
6. Suppose that you are a newspaper reporter asked to describe the changes which have taken place in a county which has had a high rate of population increase due to (a) rapid industrial growth or (b) rapid residential growth—an overflow from a large adjacent city. What changes do you think would have taken place? What would be the probable effects on the government of that county?
7. Class Project. Determine how your county's population has changed since 1950.
   a) Look for signs of increasing, decreasing, or stabilizing population in the county, and photograph these.
   b) Interview local residents who have seen the change take place over the years to obtain their impressions of how and why it has changed.
   c) Interview local residents who are new to the community to determine whether they are satisfied with the services the county provides.
   d) Determine what specific changes have taken place in the various county offices and departments since 1950. Has the number of officials changed? Has the organization or operation of the government changed? Have the

physical facilities (buildings, offices, equipment) changed much?

e) Summarize your findings of the changes in your county and its government since 1950 in a visual display and in written reports.

CHAPTER 6

CURRENT ISSUES

County governments all over Georgia are striving to provide the services, protection, and assistance which the people of local communities need and desire. However, both they and the state government, which empowers the counties, have been criticized for failing to efficiently and effectively carry out these functions. Political leaders, citizen groups, the news media, and county officials themselves argue that county government in Georgia needs reform.

What do they find wrong with our county government? Some claim that Georgia has too many counties, and that this results in duplication and waste. Others argue that many of the counties suffer from inefficient organization and outmoded procedures.

Urban counties are pressured by their rapidly increasing population to provide more extensive and improved services. However, in an era of increasing costs, rural counties with declining or stable populations find it difficult to continue the same services without increasing taxes. Furthermore, the residents of both urban and rural counties criticize their government for increases in property and other county taxes.

In addition, counties are sometimes criticized as being "too small" or "too local" to deal with broad problems like water or air pollution. At other times, the county government seems "too spread out" or "too distant" to effectively solve problems such as neighborhood traffic congestion or rural crime.

County officials point out that counties–large and small, rural and urban–are tied down to a tangled mass of very specific state legislation which has accumulated over the last two hundred years.

Critics and reformers from every side insist that county government in Georgia could be improved. Primarily, they charge that there are:

- Too many counties,
- Too little uniformity,
- Too many elected offices,
- Too little executive leadership,
- Too little authority from the state for "home rule,"
- Too much overlap with city services, and
- Too few sources of funding.

Let us look more closely at each of these problem areas.

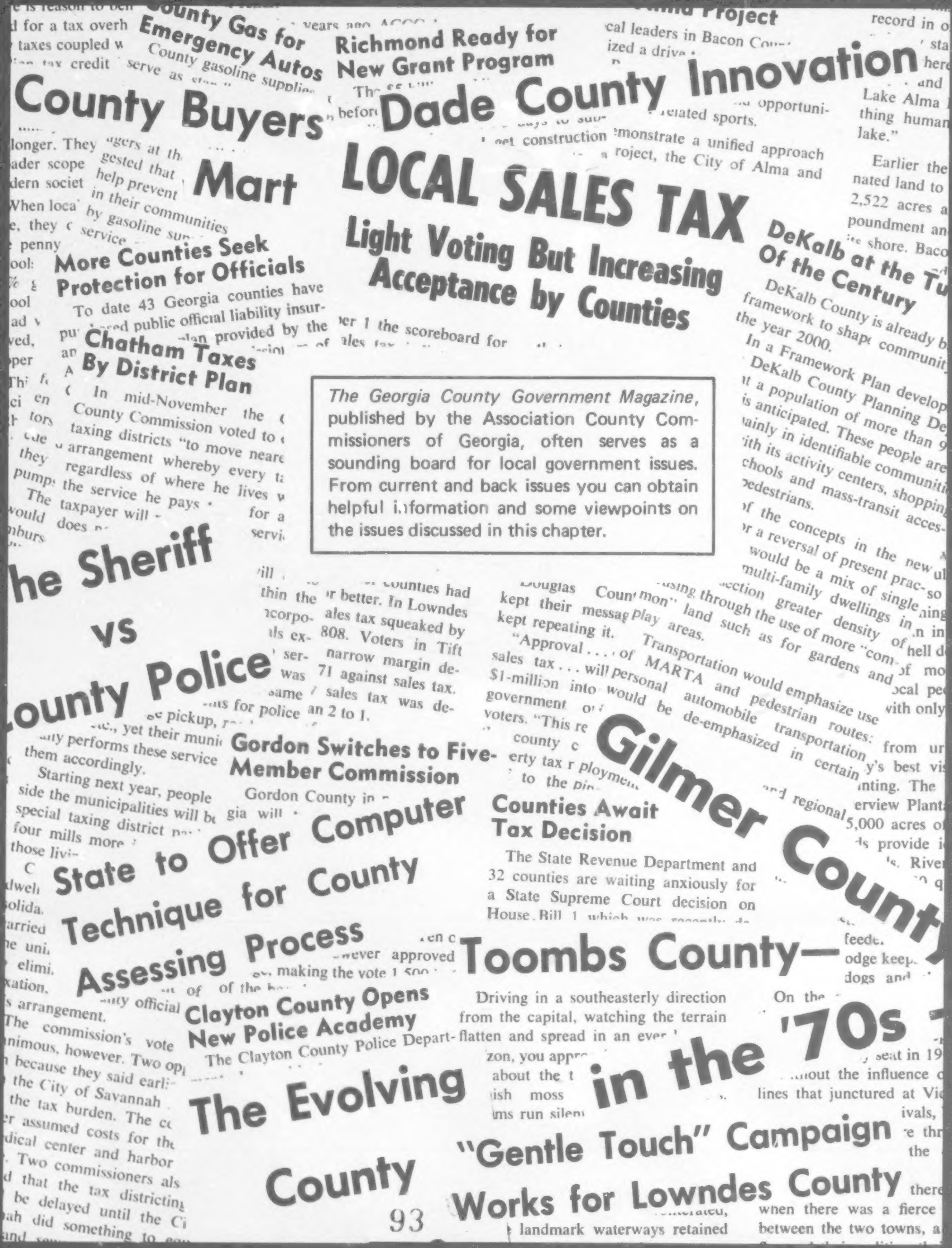
Too Many Counties?

Perhaps the most debated issue is whether or not Georgia has too many counties. One hundred and fifty-nine counties means 159 separate courthouses, 159 separate boards of commissioners, 159 separate tax departments, 159 separate road departments, 159 sheriff's departments, and so forth.

Many Georgians consider this an unnecessary and costly duplication of personnel, buildings, supplies, and services. Therefore, the people who propose reform usually encourage a reduction in the number of counties. They claim that a systematic consolidation of the counties would provide

(1) a larger tax base (that is, larger counties would have more taxpayers and consequently more funds),
(2) a more efficient-sized government unit, and
(3) an opportunity to unify common trade areas. For example, a larger county could contain, and thus efficiently serve, a large city.

Those who oppose consolidation argue that the small local county units are close to the people and should be preserved. They


County Gas for Emergency Autos
Richmond Ready for New Grant Program
Dade County Innovation
County Buyers Mart
LOCAL SALES TAX
Light Voting But Increasing Acceptance by Counties
More Counties Seek Protection for Officials
DeKalb at the Tu
Of the Century
Chatham Taxes By District Plan
The Sheriff vs County Police
Gordon Switches to Five-Member Commission
Gilmer County
State to Offer Computer Technique for County Assessing Process
Counties Await Tax Decision
Toombs County—
Clayton County Opens New Police Academy
The Evolving County
in the '70s
"Gentle Touch" Campaign Works for Lowndes County

The Georgia County Government Magazine, published by the Association County Commissioners of Georgia, often serves as a sounding board for local government issues. From current and back issues you can obtain helpful information and some viewpoints on the issues discussed in this chapter.

claim that the population growth rate shown by the 1970 census indicates that the county will become the most important unit of local government as population spills over city lines. In addition, these Georgians estimate that consolidation of the counties will not necessarily result in less expensive and more efficient governments, and therefore will not bring about a reduction in taxes.

The controversy over whether to consolidate and reduce the number of counties in Georgia has been with us for many years. Proposals for consolidation have been advocated by various political leaders and discussed in the press since the mid-1930s.

Consolidation—A Recurring Issue

Back in the 1930s, Atlanta civic leader Ivan Allen proposed that Georgia's 159 counties be organized into 41 counties which would average 1400 square miles and about 70,000 people per county.

As quoted in *The Atlanta Georgian* of May 14, 1934, Allen said: "We have nearly three times as many counties as the average of the United States and many more than we need. This puts on the people a very heavy burden of taxation that is unnecessary.

"For county government alone, the people of Georgia paid 22 million dollars in 1930. In what condition are the people to bear this frightful burden of taxation amounting to $250 per family?"

Allen proposed that mergers of counties could reduce by one-half the cost of county government. He also added that mergers should be accomplished on a comprehensive plan instead of by haphazard consolidation.

Two more recent viewpoints on county consolidation are pinpointed in the following

IN THE NEWS

County Consolidation Should Be Encouraged in Georgia

THE ISSUE—Many counties in Georgia are now working with their neighbors to provide services such as education. Is consolidation of counties likely to follow?

An increasing number of Georgia counties have found it desirable in recent years to combine forces with their neighbors to provide for services such as education.

Marion, Schley and Webster counties, located near Columbus, are now building one central high school that will serve all three counties.

Union and Towns counties in North Georgia are now building a jail for the use of both counties, and many other examples could be cited.

SUCH COOPERATION is encouraging. Hopefully, in time, it will lead to the consolidation of many Georgia counties, although few who are joining to provide services are yet talking in such terms.

At present Georgia has 159 counties, the second highest number in the nation. Texas, which has four times as much land area and twice as many people, has 254. Every other state has fewer counties than Georgia.

California, for example, has only 58. Michigan and Ohio have only 83 and 88, respectively, and neighboring Florida and Alabama have only 67 counties each.

MORE THAN half of Georgia's counties lost population during the 1960s, and many are likely to lose population in the current decade.

A reduction from the present 159 to perhaps 50 or 60 counties would be beneficial to the persons directly affected and the state as a whole.

There is not enough local revenue to justify or support so many counties; a consolidation of government offices and services would save money and improve services for all concerned.

COUNTY consolidation has not been pushed for many reasons. Officials are understandably reluctant to vote themselves out of office. County seat communities do not want to give up their status, and many persons are protective of the traditions that have grown up in their counties.

But consolidation could help people and save money; it should be considered. If two or three counties would take the first step, perhaps others would follow.

Editorial, Athens Banner-Herald, October 17, 1973.

excerpts from the *Georgia County Government Magazine*:

> County lines bear no relevance to natural dividing lines, and one county winds up with responsibility for another's sewer and water drainage. Modern-day transportation invalidates the need for 159 courthouses, and the expense of upkeep and new construction is a wanton waste of the taxpayer's money. . . .
>
> –Congressman Charles L. Weltner, February 1966, p. 16
>
> Are county divisions archaic? Are there actually too many county governments? . . .
>
> The plain fact is county consolidation will not produce one penny in real savings. County consolidation will not result in few governments and therefore in more efficient government. County consolidation will not improve public education. County consolidation will not reduce taxes. County consolidation will not further the interests of local communities. Let's be realistic. . . .

–Editorial, June 1966, p. 54.

Despite the relatively high and continued interest in county consolidation, efforts to reduce the number of counties have been mostly unsuccessful. The last *successful* county consolidation vote took place in 1932 when Campbell and Milton Counties became part of Fulton County.

Another type of consolidation has been proposed for improving local government–the merger of city and county government. Again, the record of success has been minimal. Since 1954 there have been eleven referendums on the merging of city and county government into a single local governmental unit.

The referendum must be passed by city as well as county voters. In the only successful merger (Columbus–Muscogee County), nearly all of the county's population had been previously annexed to the city, in fact only 1,500 Muscogee County residents were not residents of both the city and the county.

IN THE NEWS

Counties Getting Together

THERE HAS BEEN, as several recent news articles have noted, a growing tendency by smaller counties of Georgia to merge certain services, and some city and county governments have been doing likewise.

Some examples of this coming-together are hospitals, schools, jails and recreational services.

This practice, of course, is simply good old common sense. Some small cities and rural counties have finally come to the conclusion that they must pool their resources or face further declines.

A number of cities and counties in Georgia and elsewhere have begun to realize that the duplication and overlapping of services is expensive nonsense.

Taxpayer groups which have looked into the cost of local governments have been pained by their findings. There are "too many cooks" and the services received by the people don't nearly reflect the high cost of maintaining these inefficient agencies.

There is little rhyme or reason in continuing 159 county governments in Georgia and scores of small cities and townships, all with their own little official provinces.

It is an accepted fact that we have to put up with some inefficiency in our democratic system but a growing number of Georgians are reaching the conclusion that with the cost of government rising, it is time to trim some of the fat and overhaul obsolete mechanisms.

The place to start–if we really mean it when we say we want to get a better value for our tax dollars–is at the local governmental level.

The Atlanta Constitution, September 2, 1973, p. 19A.

What is the main reason given in this editorial and the one on page 85 for consolidating the counties?

IN THE NEWS

Merger Loses In Chatham

SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP)–The four-year-old Savannah-Chatham County consolidation charter suffered defeat again Tuesday.

The plan called for the combining of the city governments of both Savannah and the unincorporated areas of the county. The proposal would have had to pass in separate elections in the city and in the unincorporated areas to be implemented. Defeat of the proposal was attributed to a large "no" vote in the unincorporated areas of Chatham County.

Voters in Savannah city area, however, supported the measure by turning in a three-to-one margin in favor of consolidation.

There was a light voter turnout, which pro-consolidation forces had seen as threatening the plan's chances. About 23,000 of the 65,000 voters went to the polls.

The city vote was 11,321 for the measure, and 3,761 against. The unincorporated areas of Chatham County went 2,878 for the proposal and 6,202 voters rejected the plans.

The issue had erupted into a vigorous debate in the last three weeks as the Savannah-Chatham County Jaycees launched a campaign for passage of the proposal.

Several county commissioners led the opposition, saying higher taxes for residents of unincorporated areas of the county would result.

Mayor John Rousakis and state Sen. John Riley, D-Savannah, campaigned actively for the plan, which evolved from a study conducted four years ago. State Rep. Bobby Hill of Savannah had opposed the measure, saying that an amendment to the consolidation charter reducing the number of councilmen from 12 to eight would dilute black voter strength.

An effort to combine the governments of the City of Savannah and Chatham County failed in 1973. Approximately what fraction of the registered voters turned out to express their views on the merger? Which group of voters provided the greater support for the merger?

TABLE 8

City-County Consolidation Referendums in Georgia

Date	Place	Result
1954	Albany-Dougherty County	Failed
1959	Macon-Bibb County	Failed
1962	Columbus-Muscogee County	Failed
1969	Athens-Clarke County	Failed
1969	Brunswick-Glynn County	Failed
1970	Columbus-Muscogee County	Approved
1971	Augusta-Richmond County	Failed
1972	Athens-Clarke County	Failed
1972	Macon-Bibb County	Failed
1973	Savannah-Chatham County	Failed
1974	Augusta-Richmond County	Failed

Sources: Don Law & Vincent Marando, "City-County Consolidation in Georgia," *Georgia County Government Magazine*, November 1973; and Jerry Singer, "Consolidation in Georgia," Institute of Government, November 1975.

Merging Services

In spite of the failure to combine local government operations in a formal way, the *merging of services* appears to be catching on. In these arrangements, two or more counties, or a county and a city, jointly offer a service or perform a function.

One type of joint county service is the regional library. Clusters of counties have pooled their resources to provide larger and better library services to people living within these counties.

Area vocational-technical schools established to serve several counties are also examples. Many individual counties could not afford to provide adequate vocational educational programs on their own. Through joint funding and operation, they are able to provide a higher quality and more extensive education program.

Multi-County Cooperation

So many problems extend beyond county lines that county officials have found

Many counties maintain facilities for control of stray animals.

IN THE NEWS

An example of the consolidation of services by a county and a city is seen in this news item from the Jacksonville Florida Times Union *of June 15, 1974.*

COUNTY TO BUY TRUCK

Baxley, Appling Merge Fire Units

BAXLEY, Ga. —Baxley and Appling County now have a consolidated fire department which means the fire truck won't stop at the city limits signs.

Several months ago city officials threatened to cut off all fire protection to residents living outside the city unless county officials agreed to bear the larger share of the city's projected fire protection budget.

This past week, county commissioners finally agreed to combine the city-county fire protection plans. Under the plan the county agreed to purchase a new fully equipped fire truck and lease it to the city at $1 per year for the next two and a half years.

The county also agreed to pay its share of other expenses relating to the operation of the new combined fire department.

With the new agreement, which would be formally signed in the next few days, county residents can be assured of fire protection after June 30, the date the city said it would stop sending its trucks out of the city to fight fires.

that some form of continuing multi-county cooperation is a necessity. Sewage disposal, law enforcement, land development, street and highway traffic, and many other service problems do not stop at the county line. The best solutions often result from the joint efforts of a group of counties which are clustered together and have certain common problems. For example, the pollution of a lake common to several counties or the need for an improved highway might be solved by the cooperative efforts of the several counties.

In 1960 local government leaders obtained authority from the State Legislature to form area planning commissions. Since that time the idea of cooperative county planning has spread widely. There are now eighteen Area Planning and Development Commissions (APDCs) in Georgia which each include from five to thirteen counties (see Map 5). Each APDC is guided by a board of directors, which is made up of representatives from each member county and from each city in the area. Working under this board is a professional staff whose duties might include investigating, planning, and promoting efficient means for the counties to build expressways, develop the area's economy, solve sanitation problems, attract industry to the area, initiate a rapid transit system, obtain state or federal aid for development, or deal with whatever particular problems arise within each multi-county area.

The work of the APDCs is funded by the counties. Each contributes funds based on its population (ten to twenty-five cents per person). The state then provides matching funds for the district.

Although area planning does not consolidate the counties, the initial research and planning of the APDCs does help a group of counties to effectively act as a unit.

Not Enough Uniformity?

Throughout the preceding chapters we have seen that it is nearly impossible to make broad general statements about the offices, methods of financing, or services found in all county governments in Georgia. The State Constitution and the laws which govern counties allow widespread variation in tasks undertaken by Georgia counties and in the officials who carry out these tasks.

Special local amendments to the constitution may allow a county to operate differently from the requirements of the so-called "general law" in the constitution. These local amendments allow special provisions or exceptions for a named county—such as permitting it to levy a special tax, create a special court, add or eliminate a specific office, or provide a service like a county public transportation system or a fire protection program. In effect, these local amendments have made some counties unique.

These constitutionally supported differences, for example, have produced great variations in the number, type, salaries, and powers of elected and appointed officials. This, in turn, has produced far-reaching differences in the ways that the county governments operate.

Additional differences have developed from the **local laws** passed by the State Legislature. These local laws are designed to apply to only one or a few county governments. Frequently, these measures have not been forced on the counties, but rather passed at the request of the county or counties involved. In other words, they have been encouraged by county officials and local leaders and approved in a referendum by the voters.

It may be argued that providing for differences encourages the development of local governments which can respond better to the needs of the people in a small local area. On the other hand, too many differences may prevent a useful exchange of information and ideas among the counties.

The Lack of Centralized Authority

Is leadership spread thin because there are too many elected officials in Georgia counties?

Some county government specialists say, "No." They claim that it is more democratic to have a number of elected officials who are directly responsible to the voters. They argue that public election of other county officials besides the county commissioners prevents an overconcentration of power in the board of commissioners.

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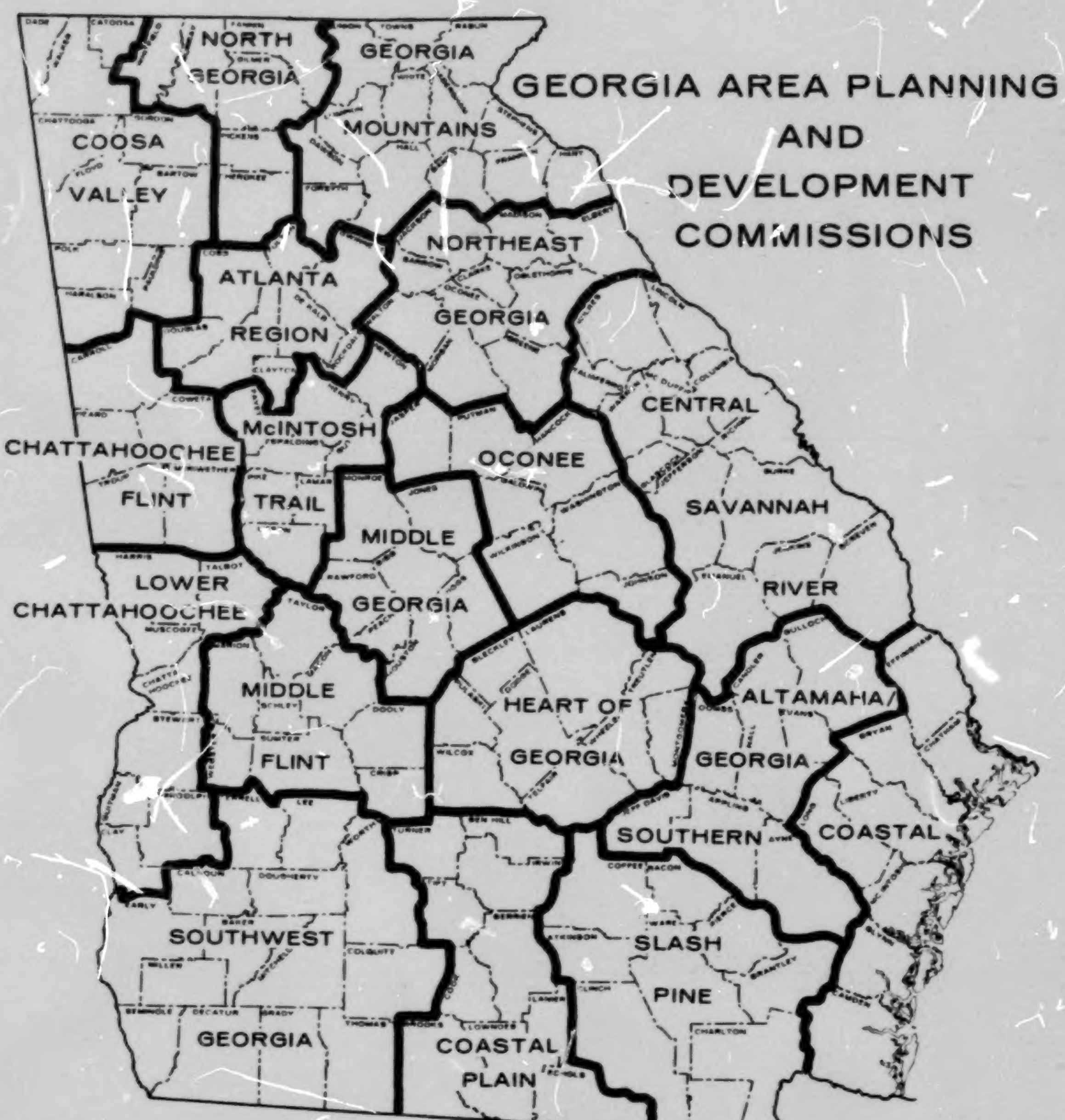
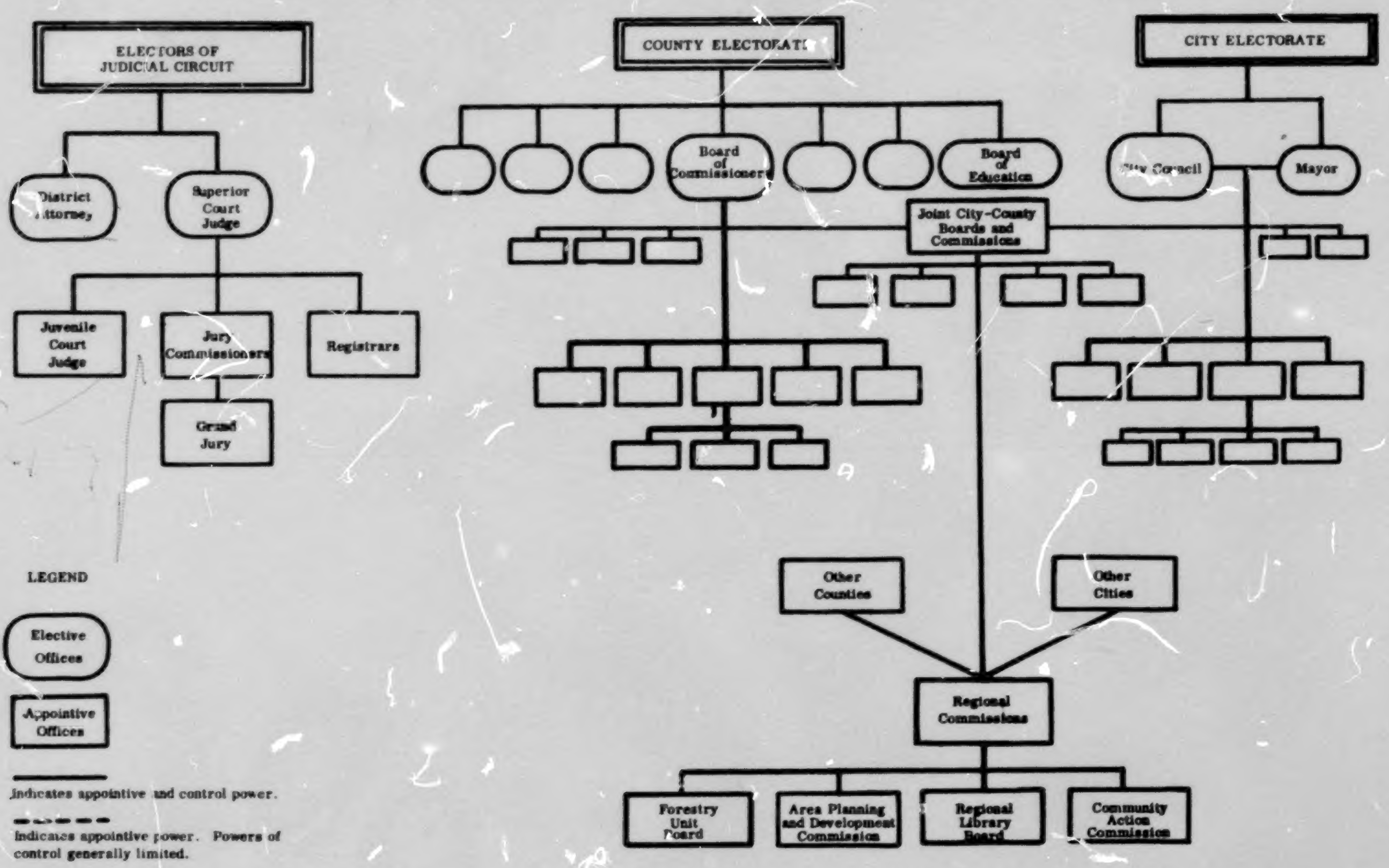
MAP 5



GEORGIA AREA PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONS

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

REGIONAL VIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



Critics of the present distribution of authority say, "Yes, there are too many elected officials." They point out that in addition to the commissioners, most counties elect at least five other county officials. Because these elected officials are chosen directly by the people, they are not under the authority of the commissioners, except for their dependence on the county budget. The result in many counties is a decentralized government where the elected heads of departments or major offices make decisions without consulting the board of commissioners.

The commissioners may attempt to control departmental activities by the way that they allocate funds in the budget. However, their including, or failing to include, certain items in the county's budget may lead to conflicts with other elected officials. For example, in several larger counties, disagreements over policy and funding have arisen between the elected sheriff and the county police, who are appointed by the county commissioners. Also, in some counties, the tax commissioner and members of the board of commissioners have disagreed about how to administer tax policies.

What can be done to reduce such conflicts and centralize authority in the counties? One solution often suggested is to elect the board of commissioners and have them appoint all department heads. This would make the department heads responsible to the board, which would strengthen the board, and, it is argued, benefit the voters. Voters, then, could hold a single body, the board of commissioners, responsible for all of the policies made and carried out throughout the county's government. In addition, eliminating the separate little "empires" which have grown up around independently elected department heads could encourage greater cooperation among the county departments.

Who Is The Chief?

Even if the number of elected officials were decreased and the authority of county government were centered in the board of commissioners, the lack of a chief executive *within* the board of commissioners would still be a problem.

Few counties have a fulltime commission chairman, and even in those counties where that leader is clearly designated, the powers of the office vary considerably. In most counties, commissioners are involved in the day-to-day administrative decisions on a part-time basis. The public finds it hard to determine which commissioner is the leader, or which commissioner is to be held responsible for a specific decision or action.

The lack of a chief executive is obvious when emergencies arise, when rapid decisions must be made, or when responsibility must be clarified or delegated.

Professional county organizations such as the National Association of Counties and Association County Commissioners of Georgia have encouraged the appointment of professional, fulltime, county chief executives trained in public administration. This executive is usually called a "county manager" or "county administrator." Much as the governor serves the state, the appointed manager acts as chief executive for the county. He or she coordinates and strives to improve the work done in the various county departments. The manager also prepares the county budget and submits it to the board of commissioners. All in all, he is responsible for carrying out the day-to-day management of county affairs, while the elected commissioners make the policy decisions.

A newer approach to strengthening executive leadership has been tried in some other states recently. In this plan, an executive head of county government is elected by the voters of the county. A group of commissioners (the county legislature) is also elected. The executive prepares a legislative program, which he submits to the commissioners, and when it has been approved and enacted, he carries it out. The commissioners serve as "watch dogs," or evaluators of the proposals of the executive. The county executive in this plan is a strong leader, but he is the person accountable to the voters for providing them with effective county government.

Do Counties Have Enough Power?

A major issue in county government concerns its control by the state. Unlike the United States, which was formed from independent states, the state of Georgia was not formed from independent counties. The state existed first, and it created units within it called "counties." The counties, therefore, lack the legal powers and the authority to deal independently with many problems which arise within their boundaries.

Under the present system, county commissioners cannot raise the salary of a county official, nor combine the duties of two county offices (such as combining tax receiver with tax collector), nor add needed offices, without first obtaining state legislative action. Whenever problems or needs develop, counties must depend on the State Legislature to enact local laws or pass special amendments which empower them to act.

For many years, Georgia county officials have urged the State Legislature to grant more "home rule" for Georgia counties. They have argued that greater home rule (or self rule) would enable counties to take care of local affairs without having to go to the State Legislature for each and every formal grant of power. Cities have pressured, along with the counties, to obtain this same power to govern themselves.

In 1966 the Georgia Constitution was amended to give home rule powers to counties. Two grants of power were made.

(1) The local governing body may adopt "clearly reasonable" resolutions and ordinances related to its "property, affairs and local government" if state laws have not already provided for the matter, and it is not inconsistent with the constitution.

A point in favor of city-county mergers is the common funding and provision of commonly used services. In the cartoon below the cartoonist has characterized one kind of inequity that may arise when the big city and its suburban surrounding counties are separately run and separately funded. Residents of the suburban counties who live outside the city limits may work in the city and use many of its services. However, their property taxes are paid to the county.

Baldy, *The Atlanta Constitution*. By permission.

Cartoon removed by ERIC due to copyright law.

(2) Local laws can be amended without action of the state legislature. These amendments may be the result of (a) an ordinance or resolution of the local governing body or (b) a petition by a stated percent of the local population which is then approved in a local election. (See art. 15, sec. 2, par. 1 of the Georgia Constitution.)

Some of the potential for home rule has not been realized, however, because county officials are often unsure about just what powers of self-determination are actually allowed in the constitutional amendment. Because the laws are somewhat vague and questions may easily arise about the legality of local action under the new home rule authority, most counties continue to follow the older assured method of formally obtaining small grants of power through legislative action.

The Money Problem

Not the least of the difficulties which plague county governments is the money problem. In Chapter Three we found that although the county has many sources for funding, the ad valorem tax on real estate provides most of the income for county operating expenses. School systems are also dependent on the real property tax. Understandably, landowners complain about the heavy burden placed on them by rising costs for both county services and county schools.

In recent years, county leaders have been urging the State Legislature to take over the support of the schools so that property taxes could be used for providing the other local government services.

A message delivered to the General Assembly in January 1970, by State Representative Hugh Logan, who was then President of the Association County Commissioners of Georgia, spells out this idea for tax reform. An excerpt from his message follows:

"At The End of Our Rope"

We in county government can take care of the streets, the parks, the airports, hospitals and libraries—the land-use planning and all the myriad citizen services that are ours by tradition and by logic.

We can take care of our county matters, if only our financial resources are not drained dry by education's demands.

Your county officials all across this state realize how essential it is to give our children's schools adequate money to produce well-educated young people. They do, indeed, need every cent we have been able to give them and a great deal more besides. We make no quarrel with school needs. We assume that school officials have the ability to correctly assess what they need. And acting on that assumption, county governments have had to strip their treasuries, channeling an ever greater portion of ad valorem revenue toward education's worthy, but insatiable, need.

Schools are taking more than half of all available ad valorem revenue, and still it is not enough.

The United States Office of Education tells us that during the next 10 years, if the present trend continues, education costs will be rising at four times the rate of the school population.

Is anyone naive enough to believe that we can increase ad valorem tax at four times its present rate? I fervently hope not! We are already at the end of our rope. We are right now neglecting too many other local government responsibilities in a futile effort to satisfy education's revenue needs. Ad valorem revenue just simply isn't big enough to do the job.

When we look at school finance, I think all of us county commissioners can sympathize with the Lilliputians when they looked at Gulliver. Here is this big, benevolent giant. We know it is good, we know we need what it can do for us, but we don't know how we can afford to feed it.

How can we afford to feed it? That is what we are asking you gentlemen of the General Assembly. You must help us in this dilemma. None of us wants to hurt this big, benevolent giant that education has become. We don't want it to lack for anything. Most of all, we don't want to stunt its growth, as must surely happen if education in Georgia continues to rely on slow-growing property values to satisfy its fast-growing appetite.

There are other good providers our schools could rely on, providers that match their growth to the expanding needs of education. I am speaking of sales tax and of state income tax.

Your own study commission on tax revision recommended that school support be tied to these broad-based taxes and less to ad valorem. It is not a new idea. It is not an evasive tactic by local government trying to divest itself of responsibility for education. It is just simply a sound, practical solution to disparity of educational opportunity.

As an association, we county commissioners are wholly agreed that administrative powers of local school boards should not be diminished, but the cost of schools is going to have to be spread over a wider base, or Georgia schools will not attain the quality of education we insist they must have.

Through no fault of their own, and certainly through no lack of concern, many counties lack the ability to provide the same level of local effort for school finance that their more industrialized neighbors can. Do their children deserve less in the way of educational opportunity? Not if we truly subscribe to the principle of public education.

Geography must not be allowed to determine educational opportunity. Surely we have advanced our thinking beyond that!

Now, gentlemen, it is time to advance our system of school finance.

What we are doing now–relying heavily on property tax for education–is archaic. It no longer fits the times. . . .

The complete message was printed in the Georgia County Government Magazine, January 1970.

In his address, Logan indicates that the great differences in property wealth among the counties produce unequal support of public education in the state. This uneven distribution of wealth is a major problem for the poorer counties in other service areas such as highway maintenance and law enforcement.

Two Measures of County Resources

Surveys of the financing capabilities of the counties were completed by the Georgia Department of Health in 1972, and by the Georgia Department of Revenue in 1974. They provide us with some comparative measures of the wealth of Georgia's 159 counties and reveal their relative financial potential for providing services.

In the Department of Health survey, the economic standing of each county was determined by evaluating certain economic characteristics:

- working-age population (21-64),
- effective buying income,
- total adjusted gross income,
- total assessed values for general property,
- number of persons receiving public assistance payments.

The county's portion of the total state population was also considered. An economic rating was figured for each county, and the counties were categorized into seven groups. The top group (Group I) represents the wealthier counties of Georgia. The groups range downward in economic rating to Group VII, which represents the least wealthy.

One-third of Georgia's counties are in the top two groups, and one-third are in the bottom two. While those counties which are gaining population tend to be in the wealthier third, those losing population tend to be among the poorer counties. One exception is Jones County which had gained over 44% population in ten years, but nevertheless had a low economic rating.

The health department survey also showed highly urbanized counties to rank higher on the economic scale than rural counties. Likewise, counties with high manufacturing earnings had a higher ranking. The counties with heavy dependence on farm income were usually low on the scale.

Some remarkable contrasts can be found by comparing some adjoining counties. For example, the health department survey shows affluent Muscogee and Chattahoochee Counties to be surrounded by poorer neighbor counties.

The comparative wealth of Georgia's counties has also been calculated by the Georgia Department of Revenue. A news article from *The Atlanta Constitution* in January 1974 (see page 97), reported the richest and poorest counties of the state according to a

TABLE 9

RELATIVE ECONOMIC STATUS OF GEORGIA COUNTIES

GROUP I

Fayette, Floyd, Fulton, Glynn, Gordon, Gwinnett, Habersham, Hall, Haralson, Barrow, Bartow, Bibb, Chatham, Clarke, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Houston, Muscogee, Richmond*, Rockdale, Upson, Walker, Whitfield

GROUP II

Baldwin*, Berrien, Camden, Carroll, Catoosa, Chattahoochee*, Chattooga, Cherokee, Coweta, Dougherty, Forsyth, Henry, Jackson, Jeff Davis, Laurens, Lowndes, Murray, Newton, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Spalding, Stephens, Tift, Troup, Ware, Wayne, White

GROUP III

Ben Hill, Bleckley, Bulloch, Colquitt, Columbia, Elbert, Lamar, McDuffie, Monroe, Oconee, Peach, Pulaski, Sumter, Thomas, Walton

GROUP IV

Butts, Coffee, Cook, Crisp, Dade, Dawson, Decatur, Dodge, Effingham, Emanuel, Evans, Fannin, Franklin, Harris, Lee, Liberty*, Lumpkin, Madison, Putnam, Rabun, Tattnall*, Toombs, Turner, Wilkes, Wilkinson

GROUP V

Banks, Brantley, Bryan, Clinch, Gilmer, Brady, Hart, Jasper, Johnson, Jones, Mitchell, Morgan, Pierce, Randolph, Seminole, Washington

GROUP VI

Appling, Bacon, Calhoun, Candler, Charlton, Clay, Crawford, Cooly, Early, Echols, Glascock, Greene, Heard, Irwin, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lanier, Lincoln, McIntosh, Meriwether, Montgomery, Oglethorpe, Pike, Schley, Screven, Taylor, Telfair, Towns, Twiggs, Union, Webster, Wheeler, Wilcox, Worth

GROUP VII

Atkinson, Baker, Brooks, Burke, Hancock, Long, Macon, Marion, Miller, Quitman, Stewart, Talbot, Taliaferro, Terrell, Treutlen, Warren.

**Rating method for one or more variables was modified because of the county's peculiar characteristics (such as an usually high proportion of military or institutional population.)*

SOURCE: Georgia Department of Public Health

formula which considered

- general sales taxes,
- property values,
- personal incomes,
- automobile tax registrations.

Notice that these two different measures of the wealth of Georgia counties produce somewhat different results. Nevertheless, both show quite clearly that a number of the counties are relatively poor and have greater difficulty paying for county services. In fact, in 1972, the governor's office reported that the wealthiest school system in Georgia had nine times the property value behind each student as the poorest system.

It is probably impossible to completely overcome these differences in resources among the counties without consolidation. But shifting the burden of school costs to the state government, as recommended by Commissioner Logan, is one possible means for reducing county expenses. The state government could utilize sales and income taxes to fund schools throughout the state. The counties then would be able to apply the bulk of property taxes to the provisions of all other services.

There is some resistance to this partial solution, however. Opponents argue that (1) the counties would lose local control of public education, and (2) equalizing resources in all school districts would reduce the quality of schooling in the wealthier counties.

IN THE NEWS

Who's Really Richer

by Paul West

The Atlanta Constitution, January 1974

The richest county in Georgia is either Fulton or DeKalb, depending on how you play the statistics game.

DeKalb, which earlier this year was listed as the richest county in Georgia and the 33rd wealthiest in the nation according to U.S. Census figures for family incomes, loads the state with an average personal income of $10,665 for 1971, according to a report issued this month by the Georgia Department of Revenue.

Fulton on the other hand, ranks first on a composite master economic ranking developed by the revenue department which combines four different economic indicators.

"No single statistic by itself is a good indicator of wealth," said Paul Mangold, the research man who compiled the report.

"For that reason, we have compiled a master economic ranking which combines property values and personal incomes with general sales taxes and automobile tag registrations," said Mangold.

The report also reveals that the growth rate of personal incomes in Georgia is lagging behind regional increases for the first time in 20 years.

For the first time since the early 1950's, the rate of increase in personal incomes in the region (52.2 percent over a five-year period ending in 1972) outstripped the growth rate for per capita incomes in Georgia (50.6 percent for the same period).

However, both were greater than the average increase nationwide of 41.7 percent. The Southeast thus continues to close the income gap with the rest of the nation.

Rapid growth in Virginia and Florida helped push the regional income average up faster than Georgia's, according to Mangold.

"Virginia is getting a lot of spill-over from the Washington, D.C. area and, of course, Florida is being developed tremendously," he said.

The state income tax continues to take over a greater share of total tax revenues in the state, the report also shows.

In 1963, income taxes were only 19 percent of total tax receipts while in 1973 they accounted for over 29 percent.

Mangold noted that the income tax is the most progressive (equitable) tax in the state as well as the one most responsive to changes in the economy.

"The income tax is an elastic tax. In an expanding economy, income tax receipts increase faster than sales tax receipts and the reverse is true for a recession," said Mangold.

A look at the revenue department's master economic ranking shows Fulton first and DeKalb second. The total value of all property in Fulton topped $7 billion in 1972, nearly twice the value of DeKalb's $4 billion, which was a distant second.

10 'Richest'

1. Fulton
2. DeKalb
3. Cobb
4. Chatham
5. Muscogee
6. Richmond
7. Bibb
8. Clayton
9. Dougherty
10. Gwinnett

Rounding out the ten richest counties are, in order, Cobb, Chatham, Muscogee, Richmond, Bibb, Clayton, Dougherty, and Gwinnett.

The only newcomer to the list is Gwinnett which replaces Floyd County, tenth on last year's list.

Quitman County is listed as the poorest county in the state, according to the economic ranking, with average income of $6,263 and property values of $6,090 per person.

By comparison, property values per person in Fulton are more than $12,000.

The other counties making up the 10 poorest are, reading from the bottom, Taliaferro, Glascock, Webster, Chattahoochee, Echols, Schley, Long, Clay and Wheeler.

In terms of income, Wheeler ranks lowest in the state with an average of $5,645 per person, only about half of DeKalb's figure.

The only change on this year's 10 poorest list is Chattahoochee, which replaces Baker County, tenth on last year's compilation.

An anomoly of the economic ranking is property values. Echols County, one of the ten percent, is the second richest in per capita property values. Dawson county, with $18,000 in property value per person, ranks first in that category.

The total value in 1972 of property in Echols is $34,100,000 and the county's 1970 population was only 1,924, giving a per capita average of $17,700.

"Echols is land poor. They have a lot of land, but that's all they've got," said Mangold.

Although the total property value is high in Echols, average incomes there are less than $1,300 per person, noted Mangold, who believes that the department's rankings accurately reflect the economic potential of Georgia counties.

10 'Poorest'

1. Quitman
2. Taliaferro
3. Glascock
4. Webster
5. Chattahoochee
6. Echols
7. Schley
8. Long
9. Clay
10. Wheeler

A breakdown of state tax revenues in the report shows that the sales tax on food, merchandise and other consumer goods still brings the state more income than any other tax source.

In fiscal 1973, sales taxes accounted for over $477 million in tax money or 37 percent of total revenues.

Personal income taxes brought in $285 million or 22 percent, while gasoline taxes, currently fixed at 7½ cents per gallon, accounted for $226 million or 17 percent of total state revenues.

Mangold said gas taxes continue to hold up well under the current energy crunch, indicating that the Arab oil embargo has not had any marked effect yet on state tax revenues.

But Mangold warns that his statistics are only complete through the first of 1974.

"We'll need several more months before we'll be able to see the complete impact of the fuel shortage on our tax receipts," said Mangold.

"Right now the most important influence on total gasoline tax revenues is the size of the population eligible to drive, which is still growing," he added.

Alcohol and tobacco taxes account for 10 percent of state tax revenues, although over half of Georgia's counties remain dry.

In 1973, beer, wine, and liquor taxes brought the state more than $73 million, excluding the additional state sales tax also levied on these items, while tobacco taxes totalled nearly $67 million.

The information on state revenue collections and trends is contained in the 1973 statistical report published by the Georgia Department of Revenue.

The revenue department, headed by Commissioner John A. Blackmon, collected a total of $1.3 billion in tax revenues for state government in the year ending June 30, 1973.

This represents an increase of more than $150,000 over the preceding year, the report notes.

What Can Ordinary People Do?

The issues discussed in this chapter focus on some of the serious problems which plague county government in Georgia today. In addition, in your own county you may find that there are special local problems related to local industries, local leadership, local resources, local terrain and weather conditions, or other factors which affect the needs of people in your area.

County residents who know something about how the county is run, who is running it, and what the current issues are, can work with others to prevent wastefulness, inefficiency, or corruption. Ordinary citizens can encourage county improvements and government responsiveness to public needs.

It can be done. The news article on this page tells how two housewives in Oklahoma, who were concerned about the poor condition of roads in their district, decided to try to do something about it. Their actions brought about a full-scale investigation and cleanup of their county government.

Both women stressed the importance of paying attention to what is going on in local government. Said one, "A lot of people probably don't think the county government is as important as the state and federal, but if you can't 'get it right' at the local level there's no hope for the rest of it."

Can *you* "get it right" about county government? Learning the basic information about Georgia counties and your own county in particular is a good start. The real test will come with using this information to make decisions when you vote, when you serve on committees, or when you serve in county office.

Try your hand at solving county problems. The problem is real; the county is fictional. After reading the case study about Alvin County, answer the discussion questions, and decide what change, if any, you think should be made in Alvin County's government. (Pages 100-102.)

IN THE NEWS

Two Angry Women Shake Up A County

BROKEN ARROW, Okla. (UPI)–Some "ordinary housewives" in Oklahoma's Wagoner County have demonstrated what folly it can be for politicians to laugh at–or even worse, ignore–an angry woman.

Two who did so are now under grand jury indictment–a grand jury called through the efforts of the "ordinary housewives" and presented evidence gathered almost exclusively by the women.

The women are not themselves politicans or lawyers; they have had little if any experience in either subject. They reject the women's liberation movement and like being housewives.

But they are the descendants of the pioneer women who settled this country and their determination to see right done for their families has led to a political awakening which has stunned even them. . . .

The two women did not know each other when their project began. But they shared in common a fierce determination to see better roads in their district. When they failed to get the satisfaction they sought from their county commissioners–a powerful political post in Oklahoma–they rebelled.

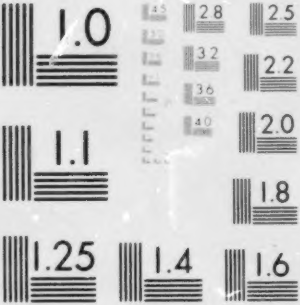
After watching commission meetings for two months and digging through the county records, the women began to travel around eastern Oklahoma, then the rest of the state, asking for political advice.

Finally, they circulated a petition calling for a grand jury investigation of their commissioners. They had more than enough signatures within a week. The jury was called, the evidence presented and two of the three county commissioners were indicted.

"We've been told they are the most powerful single political group in the state and anyone who tried to do anything with them is committing political suicide."

The indicted county commissioners, Gilbert Pinkerton, the commission chairman, and Gerald Brown, were both charged with five felony counts accusing them of misspending county funds. They have pleaded innocent and retained their posts after posting $10,000 bonds each, pending trial. No trial date has been set.

Mrs. Supernaw and Mrs. Goodner, the ladies who started it all, said they and their companions were shocked at what they found when they began to dig into the world of politics.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

"It's been an experience I wish I had gotten a long time ago," Mrs. Supernaw said. "As much as we've been disillusioned by things we've learned–things we wish we hadn't found out about–we're fairly satisfied with what we learned about our officials."

Mrs. Goodner nodded. "It's appalling to think so many people are not interested, not even registered to vote. In all the schools they teach government, but not county government, and I think that is what should be taught."

Mrs. Supernaw agreed vigorously. "We really would like to have more people made aware of how the Oklahoma system works and get interested in the government and politics. A lot of people probably don't think the county government is as important as the state and federal, but if you can't get it right at the local level there's no hope for the rest of it." . . .
–*Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, Dec. 2, 1973

CASE STUDY

WHAT SHOULD ALVIN COUNTY DO?

(Read this fictional case study and answer the questions which follow.)

Alvin County has a population of 20,000. Hamilton, the county seat and the only incorporated city in the county, has a population of 11,000. The county is governed by a three-member board of commissioners. In addition to the county commissioners, the county elects the sheriff, tax commissioner, probate judge, and clerk of the superior court.

In recent years, Hamilton has grown to the extent that housing and industry are developing into county areas outside of the city limits. Consequently, Alvin County has been called upon to provide more and more services to these heavily populated areas. The county is currently providing street lights, traffic control, building inspection, business licensing, planning, and zoning to these areas. Under consideration is the construction of a water works to provide a water supply to the county suburban area.

Increased activity by the county government has stimulated citizen interest in county government operations. In addition, a series of articles in the local newspaper has raised some important questions about county government organization.

The newspaper articles, discussing the strong and weak points of the county government, have criticized county purchasing practices as a "disorganized hodgepodge which wastes the taxpayers' money." Each county office has been purchasing its supplies separately at retail prices. There has been no attempt made to coordinate purchasing with other offices in order to obtain bulk discounts on office supplies, furniture, uniforms, gasoline, and other supplies which the government uses.

The newspaper articles note that this situation results from the fact that the major county offices are headed by elected officials who operate independently of each other. The paper concludes that "since there is no single authority with the responsibility for county government operations, it is not surprising that there are no central purchasing practices. A serious look should be taken at the way the county government here is organized and managed."

The newspaper articles have prompted civic clubs and other groups of citizens to discuss county government improvement. From purchasing problems, the debate has widened to include other areas. For instance, it was pointed out that each county officer hires the staff for his office and is responsible for the maintenance of personnel records for that office. There is no central office for taking job applications, administering tests, keeping records, or establishing qualifications.

The Citizens Committee on County Government was formed to study the problems and make recommendations. After several months of study, the committee is divided into three groups with different opinions on what to do.

—— The first group feels that three part-time commissioners are not enough to manage the county's business. They have their own businesses and farms to look after. These citizens recommend increasing the commission membership to five or perhaps seven members. "More commissioners," they say, "would mean more attention to the county's business. If we had more commissioners, they would have more time and energy to organize the county better."

—— The second group in the committee considers enlarging the county commission to be a superficial solution. "This is a management problem," they contend. "What we need is a person paid to give fulltime attention to county matters. We can't expect our present commissioners to neglect their own businesses to look after the county. If we did, nobody would run for commissioner. The elected office of commission chairman should be established as a fulltime position with an adequate salary. Then the chairman could devote his full time to serving as chief executive of the county. Voters would look to him to assume leadership in the government."

—— The third group of the committee, however, feels that this suggestion doesn't go far enough. "It's true we need a fulltime manager," they agree, "but we need somebody who is not in politics. What we need is a professional county manager who is appointed by and responsible to the county commission. He should be someone with training and experience in local governmental administration. County government is a complicated business these days. We need somebody who knows all about budgeting, purchasing, personnel management, and the mechanics of obtaining federal and state grants. Someone who is an expert.

"If we make this position an elective office, we are not likely to get an expert. Moreover, an elected chairman is not going to be in a position to impose cooperation on all of these other elected officers. A professional appointed manager can be more objective about what needs to be done and do it," argue the people in the third group.

What change do YOU think should be made in Alvin County's government?

Consider each of the following discussion questions before you decide.

Discussion Questions – Alvin County

1. By adding more members to the County Commission of Alvin County, do you think the county's administration can be improved? What problems could arise in a commission of five or seven members?
2. If the county commission were expanded, how do you think the commissioners should be elected? (a) Should a certain number of them, based on population, be elected from the city and the rest from outside the city (since city residents must also pay county property taxes)? Or (b) Would the interests of city residents be adequately represented if all commissioners were elected from equally populated districts, some of which cut across the city boundaries?
3. If a commission head were established as a fulltime position in Alvin County's government, how should the position be filled? Election by the people? Or election by the commission of one of its members?
4. How can the county's annual budget be used as a means of controlling the various county departments? Should the county commission or the commission chairman have the responsibility of drafting the county's annual budget?
5. What are the advantages of a fulltime appointed professional administrator compared to an elected fulltime executive?
6. What are the pros and cons for appointing a "home-towner" as compared to an "outsider"? Are there any advantages to having a professional administrator with no ties to Alvin County? Are

there greater advantages to recruiting someone familiar with Alvin County?

DISCUSSION

1. Obtain a state map of Georgia which gives county boundaries. Color in the seven different economic status groups reported in the Georgia Department of Public Health study summarized in this chapter. Be sure to make an accurate key for your map. Then, find out what you can about conditions in your county and in surrounding counties which contributed to its group classification. Summarize these conditions in a short essay.
2. How does population growth affect local government? Consider
    a) the need for services,
    b) government organization,
    c) financing.
3. What might be some specific advantages of combining the county you live in with one or more surrounding counties?
4. Why might the people living in your county oppose the merger of the county with others around it?
5. In what ways do counties now cooperate in providing services? What other services might be improved or provided through greater county cooperation?
6. What particular local problems confront your county in regard to:
    a) resources and environment,
    b) political leadership,
    c) economic conditions,
    d) social conditions,
    e) weather conditions,
    f) land surface.

    What is your county government doing to help solve these problems?
7. How many local problems are receiving cooperative action by the county with
    a) a city or cities,
    b) the state,
    c) the federal government.

APPENDIX A

POPULATION OF GEORGIA'S COUNTIES: 1970 AND 1960 IN DESCENDING ORDER BY 1970 CENSUS

County (County Seat)	1970 Population	1960 Population	Percent Change 1960 to 1970
1. FULTON (Atlanta)	607,592	556,326	9.2
2. DEKALB (Decatur)	415,387	256,782	61.8
3. COBB (Marietta)	196,793	114,174	72.4
4. CHATHAM (Savannah)	187,767	188,299	-0.3
5. MUSCOGEE (Columbus)	167,377	158,623	5.5
6. RICHMOND (Augusta)	162,437	135,601	19.8
7. BIBB (Macon)	143,418	141,249	1.5
8. CLAYTON (Jonesboro)	98,043	46,365	111.5
9. DOUGHERTY (Albany)	89,639	75,680	18.4
10. FLOYD (Rome)	73,742	69,130	6.7
11. GWINNETT (Lawrenceville)	72,349	43,541	66.2
12. CLARKE (Athens)	65,177	45,363	43.7
13. HOUSTON (Perry)	62,924	39,154	60.7
14. HALL (Gainesville)	59,405	49,739	19.4
15. LOWNDES (Valdosta)	55,112	49,270	11.9
16. WHITFIELD (Dalton)	55,108	42,109	30.9
17. WALKER (LaFayette)	50,691	45,264	12.0
18. GLYNN (Brunswick)	50,528	41,954	20.4
19. CARROLL (Carrollton)	45,404	36,451	24.6
20. TROUP (LaGrange)	44,466	47,189	-5.8
21. SPALDING (Griffin)	39,514	35,404	11.6
22. THOMAS (Thomasville)	34,515	34,319	0.6
23. BALDWIN (Milledgeville)	34,240	34,064	0.5
24. WARE (Waycross)	33,525	34,219	-2.0
25. LAURENS (Dublin)	32,738	32,313	1.3
26. BARTOW (Cartersville)	32,663	28,267	15.6
27. COWETA (Newnan)	32,310	28,893	11.8
28. COLQUITT (Moultrie)	32,200	34,048	-5.4
29. BULLOCH (Statesboro)	31,585	24,263	30.2
30. CHEROKEE (Canton)	31,059	23,001	35.0
31. POLK (Cedartown)	29,656	28,015	5.9
32. DOUGLAS (Douglasville)	28,659	16,741	71.2
33. CATOOSA (Ringgold)	28,271	21,101	34.0
34. TIFT (Tifton)	27,288	23,487	16.2
35. SUMTER (Americus)	26,931	24,652	9.2
36. NEWTON (Covington)	26,282	20,999	25.2
37. CHATTAHOOCHEE (Cusseta)	25,813	13,011	98.4
38. HENRY (McDonough)	23,724	17,619	34.7
39. GORDON (Calhoun)	23,570	19,228	22.6
40. UPSON (Thomaston)	23,505	23,800	-1.2
41. WALTON (Monroe)	23,404	20,481	14.3
42. COFFEE (Douglas)	22,828	21,953	4.0
43. COLUMBIA (Appling)	22,327	13,423	66.3
44. DECATUR (Bainbridge)	22,310	25,203	-11.5
45. JACKSON (Jefferson)	21,093	18,499	14.0
46. HABERSHAM (Clarkesville)	20,691	18,116	14.2
47. CHATTOOGA (Summerville)	20,541	19,954	2.9
48. STEPHENS (Toccoa)	20,331	18,391	10.5
49. MERIWETHER (Greenville)	19,461	19,756	-1.5
50. TOOMBS (Lyons)	19,151	16,837	13.7
51. MITCHELL (Camilla)	18,956	19,652	-3.5
52. BURKE (Waynesboro)	18,255	20,596	-11.4

53.	EMANUEL (Swainsboro)	18,189	17,815	2.1
54.	ROCKDALE (Conyers)	18,152	10,572	71.7
55.	CRISP (Cordele)	18,087	17,768	1.8
56.	WAYNE (Jesup)	17,858	17,921	-0.4
57.	GRADY (Cairo)	17,826	18,015	-1.0
58.	LIBERTY (Hinesville)	17,569	14,487	21.3
59.	PAULDING (Dallas)	17,520	13,101	33.7
60.	WASHINGTON (Sandersville)	17,480	18,903	-7.5
61.	ELBERT (Elberton)	17,262	17,835	-3.2
62.	JEFFERSON (Louisville)	17,174	17,468	-1.7
63.	FORSYTH (Cumming)	16,928	12,170	39.1
64.	BARROW (Winder)	16,859	14,485	16.4
65.	TATTNALL (Reidsville)	16,557	15,837	4.5
66.	PEACH (Fort Valley)	15,990	13,846	15.5
67.	HARALSON (Buchanan)	15,927	13,543	9.5
68.	HART (Hartwell)	15,814	15,229	3.8
69.	DODGE (Eastman)	15,658	16,483	-5.0
70.	McDUFFIE (Thomson)	15,276	12,627	21.0
71.	WORTH (Sylvester)	14,770	16,682	-11.5
72.	BROOKS (Quitman)	13,739	15,292	-10.2
73.	EFFINGHAM (Springfield)	13,632	10,144	34.4
74.	MADISON (Danielsville)	13,517	11,246	20.2
75.	FANNIN (Blue Ridge)	13,357	13,620	-1.9
76.	BEN HILL (Fitzgerald)	13,171	13,633	-3.4
77.	MURRAY (Chatsworth)	12,986	10,447	24.3
78.	MACON (Montezuma)	12,933	13,170	-1.8
79.	FRANKLIN (Carnesville)	12,784	13,274	-3.7
80.	APPLING (Baxley)	12,726	13,246	-3.9
81.	EARLY (Blakely)	12,682	13,151	-3.6
82.	SCREVEN (Sylvania)	12,591	14,919	-15.6
83.	JONES (Gray)	12,218	8,468	44.3
84.	COOK (Adel)	12,129	11,822	2.6
85.	BERRIEN (Nashville)	11,556	12,038	-4.0
86.	HARRIS (Hamilton)	11,520	11,167	3.2
87.	TERRELL (Dawson)	11,416	12,742	-10.4
88.	TELFAIR (McRae)	11,381	11,715	-2.9
89.	FAYETTE (Fayetteville)	11,364	8,199	38.6
90.	CAMDEN (Woodbine)	11,334	9,975	13.6
91.	MONROE (Forsyth)	10,991	10,495	4.7
92.	LAMAR (Barnesville)	10,688	10,240	4.4
93.	BUTTS (Jackson)	10,560	8,976	17.6
94.	DOOLY (Vienna)	10,404	11,474	-9.3
95.	BLECKLEY (Cochran)	10,291	9,642	6.7
96.	GREENE (Greensboro)	10,212	11,193	-8.8
97.	WILKES (Washington)	10,184	10,961	-7.1
98.	DADE (Trenton)	9,910	8,666	14.4
99.	MORGAN (Madison)	9,904	10,280	-3.7
100.	PICKENS (Jasper)	9,620	8,903	8.1
101.	JEFF DAVIS (Hazlehurst)	9,425	8,914	5.7
102.	WILKINSON (Irwinton)	9,393	9,250	1.5
103.	PIERCE (Blackshear)	9,281	9,678	-4.1
104.	HANCOCK (Sparta)	9,019	9,979	-9.6
105.	GILMER (Ellijay)	8,956	8,922	0.4
106.	TURNER (Ashburn)	8,790	8,439	4.2
107.	RANDOLPH (Cuthbert)	8,734	11,078	-21.2
108.	LUMPKIN (Dahlonega)	8,728	7,241	20.5
109.	PUTNAM (Eatonton)	8,394	7,798	7.6
110.	JENKINS (Millen)	8,332	9,148	-8.9
111.	RABUN (Clayton)	8,327	7,456	11.7
112.	BACON (Alma)	8,233	8,359	-1.5
113.	TWIGGS (Jeffersonville)	8,222	7,935	3.6

114.	PULASKI (Hawkinsville)	8,066	8,204	-1.7
115.	IRWIN (Ocilla)	8,036	9,211	-12.8
116.	OCONEE (Watkinsville)	7,915	6,304	25.6
117.	TAYLOR (Butler)	7,865	8,311	-5.4
118.	WHITE (Cleveland)	7,742	6,935	11.6
119.	JOHNSON (Wrightsville)	7,727	8,048	-4.0
120.	OGLETHORPE (Lexington)	7,598	7,926	-4.1
121.	McINTOSH (Darien)	7,371	6,364	15.8
122.	PIKE (Zebulon)	7,316	7,138	2.5
123.	EVANS (Claxton)	7,290	6,952	4.9
124.	SEMINOLE (Donalsonville)	7,059	6,802	3.8
125.	LEE (Leesburg)	7,044	6,204	13.5
126.	WILCOX (Abbeville)	6,998	7,905	-11.5
127.	BANKS (Homer)	6,833	6,497	5.2
128.	UNION (Blairsville)	6,811	6,510	4.6
129.	WARREN (Warrenton)	6,669	7,360	-9.4
130.	TALBOT (Talbotton)	6,625	7,127	-7.0
131.	CALHOUN (Morgan)	6,606	7,341	-10.0
132.	BRYAN (Pembroke)	6,539	6,226	5.0
133.	STEWART (Lumpkin)	6,511	7,371	-11.7
134.	CANDLER (Metter)	6,412	6,672	-3.9
135.	CLINCH (Homerville)	6,405	6,545	-2.1
136.	MILLER (Colquitt)	6,397	6,908	-7.4
137.	MONTGOMERY (Mount Vernon)	6,099	6,284	-2.9
138.	BRANTLEY (Nahunta)	5,940	5,891	0.8
139.	LINCOLN (Lincolnton)	5,895	5,906	-0.2
140.	ATKINSON (Pearson)	5,879	6,188	-5.0
141.	JASPER (Monticello)	5,760	6,135	-6.1
142.	CRAWFORD (Knoxville)	5,748	5,816	-1.2
143.	CHARLTON (Folkston)	5,680	5,313	6.9
144.	TREUTLEN (Soperton)	5,647	5,874	-3.9
145.	HEARD (Franklin)	5,354	5,333	0.4
146.	MARION (Buena Vista)	5,099	5,477	-6.9
147.	LANIER (Lakeland)	5,031	5,097	-1.3
148.	WHEELER (Alamo)	4,596	5,342	-14.0
149.	TOWNS (Hiawassee)	4,565	4,538	0.6
150.	BAKER (Newton)	3,875	4,543	-14.7
151.	LONG (Ludowici)	3,746	3,874	-3.3
152.	DAWSON (Dawsonville)	3,639	3,590	1.4
153.	CLAY (Fort Gaines)	3,636	4,551	-20.1
154.	SCHLEY (Ellaville)	3,097	3,256	-4.9
155.	TALIAFERRO (Crawfordville)	2,423	3,370	-28.1
156.	WEBSTER (Preston)	2,362	3,247	-27.3
157.	GLASCOCK (Gibson)	2,280	2,672	-14.7
158.	QUITMAN (Georgetown)	2,180	2,432	-10.4
159.	ECHOLS (Statenville)	1,924	1,876	2.6

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The Institute is organized into five divisions: Governmental Research and Services, Governmental Training, Legislative Research, Police Science, and Corrections. Collectively, the divisions design and conduct over 300 continuing education programs a year in which over 11,000 public officials participate. Technical assistance takes many forms including evaluations of existing facilities or methods, provision of information for decision making, and assistance in establishing new programs.

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TEACHER'S MANUAL
FOR COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN GEORGIA

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT - UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
SEPTEMBER 1976

TABLE OF CONTENTS AND SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES FOR THREE TO SIX WEEKS OF STUDY OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN GEORGIA

This schedule of activities is suggested as a plan for teaching County Government in Georgia. Depending on student ability, the teacher's instructional goals, placement of the material in the curriculum, and the availability of local resources, this plan may be utilized in three to six weeks of study. Optional lessons (marked with an asterisk) are designed to extend the study of county government in Georgia to include a closer examination of the specific county in which the school is located. These optional activities may require the use of Georgia reference works, local resource persons and newspapers, and local documents or reports.*

Days Required	Topic and Page
	Chapter One: Your County Government
1 day	Lesson 1 - County Services . . . 1
1 day	Lesson 2 - The County At Work . . . 2
	Chapter Two: Officials and Their Departments
1 day	Lesson 3 - The County Commission . . . 6
1 day	*Lesson 4 - The Role of a Commissioner . . . 9
1 day	Lesson 5 - County Officers . . . 9
1 day	*Lesson 6 - County Officials in the News . . . 11
1 day	*Lesson 7 - Property Owners and the County . . . 12
	Chapter Three: Sources of County Funds
2 days	Lesson 8 - Ad Valorem Taxes . . . 15
2 days	Lesson 9 - Other Sources of Revenue . . . 19
	Chapter Four: The Courts
1 day	Lesson 10 - The Superior Court . . . 23
1 day	*Lesson 11 - Local Activity of the Superior Court . . . 24
1 day	Lesson 12 - The Judicial Process . . . 27
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1 day	*Lesson 15 - Rural Migration: the U.S. and Georgia . . . 33

*optional lesson

1 day Lesson 16 - Effects of a Boom . . . 34
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*optional lesson

COPYMASTERS

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Lesson 2 Fact Sheet . . . 7

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Lesson 15 "Growth Policies to Suit Citizen Preference" . . . 35

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Lesson 20 "The County Administrator Proves His Worth" . . . 49

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CHAPTER 1 YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT

LESSON ONE--COUNTY SERVICES (ONE DAY)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Give an example of each category of service found in his/her home county.

2. Make a generalized statement about the type of services found in his/her home county.

3. Suggest reasons why some counties provide more services than others.

4. Discuss personal misconceptions about the scope of county government.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Knowledge of Government Services Test (p. 3 of MANUAL).

2. Reading: pp. 1-7 in COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN GEORGIA.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Before issuing books to students and assigning any reading, administer the Knowledge of Government Services Test on page 3. (That page can be used as a master from which copies can be made.) The purposes of administering this test before students begin reading are (a) to motivate thinking about government services with which they are already familiar, (b) to raise questions in their minds about possibly faulty assumptions, and (c) to give a sense of direction to their initial reading.

After administering the test (about ten minutes), collect the papers without discussion, implying that they will be graded and handed back at a later time.

The Knowledge of Government Services Test is, of course, a "trick test" in the sense that all responses are appropriately answered with a "C." Each service is performed at the county level, although some are done in cooperation with, or as the local agent of, state and/or federal governments.

2. Have students read questions 1 and 2 on p. 15. Then assign reading of pp. 1-6 in text, including Table 1. As they read, have students prepare to discuss the questions. (While students are reading, you may wish to grade their pre-tests.)

Lesson One (Cont.)

3. Hand back the pre-tests. Students will probably initiate discussion of the test results. Point out the mistakes that were most common, and spend some time exploring why students may have been unaware of the scope of county government. Keep in mind, however, that some services are performed in cooperation with, or as the local agent of, the state or federal government.

Eventually bring the discussion around to questions 1 and 2 on p. 15. You might list some of the students' contributions on the board. Again, the focus of this lesson is on thinking about and exploring the parameters of a field that students have probably never seriously considered.

In preparation for Lesson Two, have students read pp. 7-14 in the textbook.

LESSON TWO--THE COUNTY AT WORK (ONE DAY)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Suggest why counties were formed by states.

2. Tell how population growth stimulated the development of the number of counties and the number of services provided by the counties.

3. Point out differences and similarities between the structure and functions of the first eight counties and counties today.

4. Gather and compare information about county services from primary sources (phone book and county road map).

5. Utilize data presented in tabular form to make generalizations.

6. Generalize about the differences in services required of metro and non-metro counties.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Reading: pp. 7-14 in text.

2. Local telephone book (4 or 5 copies).

3. Large county road map and colored markers.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES TEST

DIRECTIONS: This test is designed to determine if you are familiar with the services provided by three levels of your government. In the blank space before each statement, place an "F" if you think the service is performed by the Federal government, an "S" if you think it is performed by the State, and a "C" if you think it is performed by the County government.

_____ 1. developing sanitary landfills

_____ 2. carrying out court orders

_____ 3. enforcing zoning ordinances

_____ 4. operating a water system

_____ 5. providing ambulance service

_____ 6. advising farmers on planting

_____ 7. assisting poor and unemployed persons

_____ 8. conducting presidential elections

_____ 9. registering automobiles

_____ 10. issuing marriage licenses

_____ 11. collecting taxes for public schools

_____ 12. recording property deeds

_____ 13. maintaining health clinics

_____ 14. controlling stray dogs

_____ 15. planning recreational facilities

_____ 16. preserving historical sites

_____ 17. setting property tax rates

_____ 18. regulating liquor sales

_____ 19. building roads and bridges

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. (The scope and length of time spent on this activity will depend upon the county with which the class is dealing.)

Divide the class into four or five groups. Give each group a phone book and have them list local services as directed in questions 3 and 4 on p. 15. They should also note the addresses of the county offices. Have them do the same for the largest city in the county.

Each group should then determine whether or not there are cooperative and/or overlapping services. (If you are in a large metro county with several municipalities, each group might investigate a different city.)

On the board, combine the lists of the student groups. Indicate both the common and unique services offered. After completing the lists, use the county map to plot the locations of various services. In the discussion that follows, focus on how adequately service provisions meet the needs of residents. For example, consider where health clinics are located? sanitary landfills? recreational facilities?

2. Have students turn to Table 1 on pp. 6-7. Using the lists on the board, compare your own county with national findings. What does your county offer, or not offer, in services that other counties in the U.S. do? What factors might explain the differences in services among counties?

3. Students should come to understand that patterns of historical development account for the variations among county government structures and functions. Utilize questions 9-14 on p. 15 to organize discussion about the development of county government.

In 1777, poor transportation and communication prevented central governments (state and national) from having direct contact with the people. Stress the state's need for local administrative units which could place all citizens in personal contact with their government--even then, when government services were very limited. Today, even though communication is superior, new government services--such as health clinics and welfare programs --have required an increase in local facilities so that citizens can make use of the services.

CHAPTER 2 OFFICIALS AND THEIR DEPARTMENTS

LESSON THREE--THE COUNTY COMMISSION (ONE DAY)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Give examples of legislative (or policy) decisions of county commissioners.

2. Give examples of executive (or administrative) decisions of county commissioners.

3. Write a paragraph describing his or her own county commission (including number, terms of office, requirements for holding office, salary, amount of responsibility - fulltime or part-time, and occupations of people who run for commissioner).

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Reading: pp. 17-22 in text.

2. Fact Sheet (1 copy for each student - may be duplicated from sample on page 7 of MANUAL).

3. Guest speaker: county commissioner (optional).

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Discussion of the reading assignment should focus on the commission as the chief governing body of the county which combines both legislative and executive responsibilities. Some confusion may arise regarding the difference between a "county ordinance" (passed by the local body) and a "local law" (passed by the state legislature, but pertaining to a locality).

2. Because specific details about commissions vary widely from county to county, the teacher, or the students, need to obtain data about their own county. The Fact Sheet can be used to supplement the text with local information. It is especially useful when students are required to gather the information on their own.

The information could be obtained from a guest speaker (see Optional Lesson Four), or a small group of students might visit the office of the county clerk to obtain it, or each student may be assigned to get the information from parents, local newspapers, or the local library. If time does not permit any of the above, or as a last resort, the teacher could collect the information and give it to the students in some format. (Note: The filled-in Fact Sheets will also be used in Lesson Five.)

______________ County - Fact Sheet

I. County Commissions

a. Number of commissioners __________

b. Term of office __________ years

c. Residency requirement __________ years, __________ months

d. Age requirement __________ years

e. Qualifying fee (to run for office) $ __________

f. Salary per month $__________

g. Current commissioners

	Name	Occupation	Years in Office
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

II. Other Elected* County Officials

	Name	Years in Office	Salary
Probate Judge			
Sheriff			
Tax Commissioner			
School Superintendent			
Clerk of Superior Court			

*School Superintendent may be appointed.

LESSON FOUR--THE ROLE OF A COMMISSIONER (OPTIONAL)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Write a news report from notes taken at an oral presentation.

2. Generalize about the qualities needed to be an effective county commissioner.

3. Generalize about the workload of a county commissioner.

4. Name several current problems facing the county commission.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Guest speaker: A county commissioner.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURE

1. Invite a commissioner from your county to speak to the class.

Prior to the commissioner's presentation, students should prepare a list of questions designed to bring out (a) a clarification of the legislative and administrative duties of the commissioner, (b) the current problems or priority needs facing the county, and (c) the qualities one needs to be an effective commissioner. Generally, the students' questions should focus on information not readily available elsewhere and on the decision-making process at the county level.

2. During the presentation, students should take notes--as if they were reporters at a press conference. From these notes each student can prepare a news report. The best-written report might be sent to the local paper for publication.

LESSON FIVE--COUNTY OFFICERS (ONE DAY)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. List several duties and responsibilities of each elected county official.

2. Explain the importance of one of the functions of each county office.

3. Distinguish among elected and appointed officials.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Reading: pp. 22-40 in text.

2. Filled-in Fact Sheets (see Lesson Three).

3. Organizational chart (teacher-made).

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Because of the large number of functions performed by each county official and the lack of uniformity from county to county, it is necessary to treat your own county as a special case.

Using the models found on pp. 13 and 14 of the text, construct a large chart of your county organization. Make sure the chart is large enough to be seen by the whole class. (The chart may be drawn on the board if it won't be erased.) Fill in the titles of the elected and appointed officials found in your county. Then, from their Fact Sheets, have students supply the names of the officials for various offices.

2. Turn to question 1 on p. 41. For each situation, ask students to determine, from information they already have, to which county office they would go. Responses should be as follows:

a. probate judge
b. coroner
c. county commissioners' office
d. tax commissioner
e. tax commissioner
f. probate judge
g. sheriff
h. sheriff
i. probate judge
j. clerk of superior court
k. county commissioners' office
l. probate judge
m. clerk of superior court
n. tax commissioner
o. clerk of superior court

You may want to create some more situations like those in question 1, or you may wish to have students think up problems citizens might have which require the assistance of an elected official, including some (such as misbehavior on the school buses) which would require the attention of the school superintendent or school board members.

3. Appointed officials vary widely in number and responsibility. Smaller counties (such as Evans) may have only a very few, while

the larger counties (such as Fulton and DeKalb) may have dozens. Since it is important that students be familiar with their local appointed officials (such as the county clerk, county manager, agricultural extension agent, and director of family and children services), they should be included in the organizational chart and some situations created to show to students the kinds of duties appointed officials have.

LESSON SIX--COUNTY OFFICIALS IN THE NEWS (OPTIONAL)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Use the newspaper as a source of information about county government.
2. Generalize about the kinds of local official action that tend to be considered most newsworthy by the press.
3. Classify county government information according to a class-developed scheme.
4. Contrast factual news and editorial comment about county government.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Back issues of the local newspaper.
2. Rulers.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. To determine which officials and which official actions get into print, collect back issues of your local newspapers. Usually, attention is focused on only a few county officials. The sheriff, county commissioner, tax commissioner, and school superintendent are in the news frequently because the duties they have to carry out and the decisions they have to make often bring them into conflict with some citizens. The probate judge and the clerk of the superior court get into the news less often. No public official, however, escapes public scrutiny.

An indication of the visibility of officials can be obtained by letting students measure the amount of newspaper space devoted (a) to county government in general, and (b) to particular officials (e.g., sheriff, county commissioners, tax commissioners, probate judge, etc.) over the past three or six months.

Students can use column inches (or the length or amount of space per column) as a measure. They might also consider the position of the material in the newspaper, i.e., is it front page news or not?

Using the same measuring system, students might compare the amount of space about county government to that about city government. Which gets the greater news coverage--and why?

2. Other comparisons about newspaper coverage of county government can be made, using column inches as a measuring tool and considering placement in newspaper.'

Students can compare how much space (per column inch) on county government concerns (a) money vs. non-money matters, (b) policy decisions vs. administrative actions, (c) controversial issues vs. non-controversial issues, and (d) ceremonial, public relations, partisan political, and/or routine activities.

Have the students make generalizations about their findings.

3. After some practice, have students look through newspapers for editorials on local government. What is their paper's stance? Is it consistent? Are there areas of county government with which the editor is particularly concerned? Are there areas that seem to be ignored? Does editorial concern appear to influence the space allocated to news items on local government?

LESSON SEVEN

PROPERTY OWNERS AND COUNTY OFFICIALS (OPTIONAL)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. List several ways in which county government supports and protects private property rights.

2. Name the county officials to whom one would go with certain problems involving property.

3. Tell in his/her own words the reasoning behind zoning regulations.

4. Offer several viewpoints on a rezoning issue.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Zoning map and county zoning ordinance.

2. Interviews with county officials.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. In discussing question 5, p. 41, remind students that private property is important to most citizens. County government supports one's right to buy, hold, and sell real estate. In addition, county government determines the specific responsibilities citizens must assume as property owners.

The county commissioners (and, perhaps, a road commissioner) make determinations regarding access (easements) to land. The county surveyor is responsible for accurate location of property. The clerk of superior court keeps accurate records of the legal disposition of property. The tax assessor determines the value of property (for taxing purposes) and sees that property owners support county government services through tax monies. The sheriff, too, protects property rights through enforcement of laws designed to maintain public order and safety. In addition, appointed officials, such as agricultural extension agents, building inspectors, and health inspectors help to protect one's farmlands, businesses, and dwellings.

2. Have students determine which county officials might help them if, as property owners, they faced the following problems:

   a. a neighbor's septic tank overflows onto your property;

   b. the newly paved county road is causing water run-off to erode your driveway;

   c. an auto-wrecker is planning to buy land next to your house to have a junkyard;

   d. a group of children have been taking fish from your pond;

   e. a real estate salesman informs you that you must take down your fence because it's on his client's land;

   f. you receive a letter from the son of the former owner of your property claiming the land is his.

3. Zoning and land use planning are attempts to protect property and provide for orderly development. Zoning is a source of controversy in many Georgia counties, and rezoning actions take up much time at county commission meetings. While a particular zoning regulation may please one group of property owners, it may be a source of indignation to another. Unsurprisingly, hearings on zoning issues are often the most well-attended commission meetings because they involve the property rights of many citizens.

Obtain a zoning map and written summary of your county's zoning regulations from the county courthouse. What is the pattern of zoning? How was it determined? Were guidelines provided by the state? How long has the county had zoning regulations?

From members of the planning and zoning commission, or county commissioners, or the local newspaper, have students identify a current zoning issue and outline the arguments of property owners on differing sides of the controversy.

CHAPTER 3 SOURCES OF COUNTY FUNDS

LESSON EIGHT--AD VALOREM TAXES (TWO DAYS)

OBJECTIVES The student should be able to

1. Give examples of real property, personal property, intangible property, and exempt property.

2. Explain why counties have varying tax rates.

3. Compute the taxes on a piece of real property by using a given assessed valuation and a county's millage rate.

4. Describe how homestead exemptions are applied.

5. Suggest problems which might arise from total dependence on ad valorem taxes.

6. Present a point of view on the issue of dependence on ad valorem property taxes.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Reading: pp. 43-48 in text.

2. Motor vehicle registrations.

3. Transparency master of computed real property tax (see p. 17 of MANUAL).

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Typically, students have heard only negative comments about taxes. Therefore, it is important to begin a study of taxation by exploring the reasoning behind the taxing process.

From question 5 on p. 53, use the comments of the county commissioner and the tax commissioner interviewed in Chapter 2 to initiate a discussion of ad valorem real estate taxes:

> What is the problem with taxing real property?
>
> Are these taxes an unjust burden on property owners?

Refer students to the graph on p. 55. Ask them to relate experiences they or their parents may have had with ad valorem taxes. (Although students probably own no real property, they may own autos.)

This discussion should be designed to stimulate thinking, not answer any questions. You might want to record student ideas and store them for review at the end of the study of this chapter.

2. As part of the discussion, it is necessary to make sure that the class knows that there are ad valorem taxes other than those on real estate. Have available copies of (or original) motor vehicle registration certificates. A comparison of several such forms will reveal that taxes are paid according to the value of the vehicle. You might spend some time showing on the blackboard how the tax is figured on a vehicle (e.g., those listed in question 11 on p. 53 in the text). (You can obtain your county's rate of taxation on motor vehicles and valuation information from the tax commissioner's office. Try to request information when they are not swamped with tag applications.)

3. Turning to the primary source of county revenue--the ad valorem tax on real property (land and buildings)--emphasis needs to be placed on the thinking behind this form of taxation. Unfortunately, the tax on real property is little understood by most citizens. Often it is seen as discriminatory and unfair, penalizing the person who chooses to own his home while renters "get off free."

Have students look at Table 3, p. 45. The wide range in tax rates is immediately obvious. Does this, for example, mean that residents of Early County are getting off cheaper than residents of Rockdale County? Not necessarily so.

Taxes on real estate do vary widely from county to county, especially as one moves from rural to urban areas or vice versa. This seeming inequity becomes more reasonable when one considers the great differences in tax bases (total assessed value of property) and in services demanded by citizens from county to county. Even though DeKalb County has a greater tax base than Grady County, for example, DeKalb provides many more services to more people (many of whom own no real property) than does Grady. Therefore, DeKalb County's expenditures for public services are so great that it has to have a millage rate twice that of Grady. A point to consider is that "you get what you pay for." Government services cost money and government revenues depend upon the citizen's willingness to pay his fair share in return for the services he receives.

Basic assumptions underlying the property tax are that it is fair because it reflects the individual's ability to pay, and that an individual holding greater amounts of property is utilizing a greater proportion of government services. This is, of course, not true in every case.

4. Determination of individual property taxes is illustrated easily if students work out computations themselves. To initiate this activity, have students examine the facsimile of a tax bill

TAX COMPUTATIONS

(QUESTION 3, PAGE 53: EXAMPLES A & C)

a.	Fair Market Value	$ 65,000
	Assessed Valuation (40% of 65,000)	26,000
	Homestead Exemption	- 2,000
	Net Assessed Valuation	24,000
	County Tax Rate (25 mills = 2.5%)	x 2.5%
	Property Tax ($24,000 x 2.5%)	$ 600.00

c.	Fair Market Value	$ 40,000
	Assessed Value (40% of 40,000)	16,000
	County Tax Rate (27 mills = 2.7%)	x 2.7%
	Property Tax ($16,000 x 2.7%)	$ 432.00

on p. 48. This is what they, as property owners, would receive. The breakdown at the bottom of that page illustrates how the final figures were determined. (Perceptive students will note that Oconee County's tax rate went from 20.75 in 1974 to 21.50 in 1975.)

Assign students the four problems in question 3 on p. 53. The examples show variations with and without homestead exemption. The models at the top of pp. 46 and 47 will permit each student to check his work as he proceeds. A transparency showing completed computations of examples A and C can be made from the master on page 17 of MANUAL and used to check this assignment after it is worked in class.

LESSON NINE--OTHER SOURCES OF REVENUE (TWO DAYS)

OBJECTIVES The student should be able to

1. Define federal revenue sharing.

2. Give examples of expenditures for which federal revenue sharing funds may be used.

3. Give an example of state aid to counties.

4. Describe several non-tax sources of revenue.

5. Gain data from tables and graphs.

6. Summarize data on county revenues received from each of several sources.

7. Summarize data on county expenditures for several major purposes.

8. Present and evaluate a point of view on the issue of dependence on ad valorem taxes.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Reading: pp. 49-55 in text.

2. Map of referendum results on optional sales tax (see p. 21 of MANUAL).

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Initiate discussion of alternate sources of revenue by examining the graph on p. 50. It illustrates the heavy dependence by county governments on property taxes. Taking the other "slices" in turn, students should see that additional taxes--such as business and local option sales taxes--account for only a very small percent of income. Likewise, non-tax revenues--to which some students may have contributed in the form of traffic fines or permit fees--also make up a relatively small portion of county revenue.

Have students read pp. 49-52. Point out that in certain counties, some county officials--such as the sheriff and the probate judge--may rely heavily on fees and fines to support their offices. Also, in recent years the amount of state and federal support of county operations has increased. Particularly noteworthy is the development of federal revenue sharing.

2. Federal revenue sharing has not been implemented without controversy. Although there are federal guidelines for spending these funds, local officials have much discretionary power in allocating expenditures. Review with students the listing on p. 50.

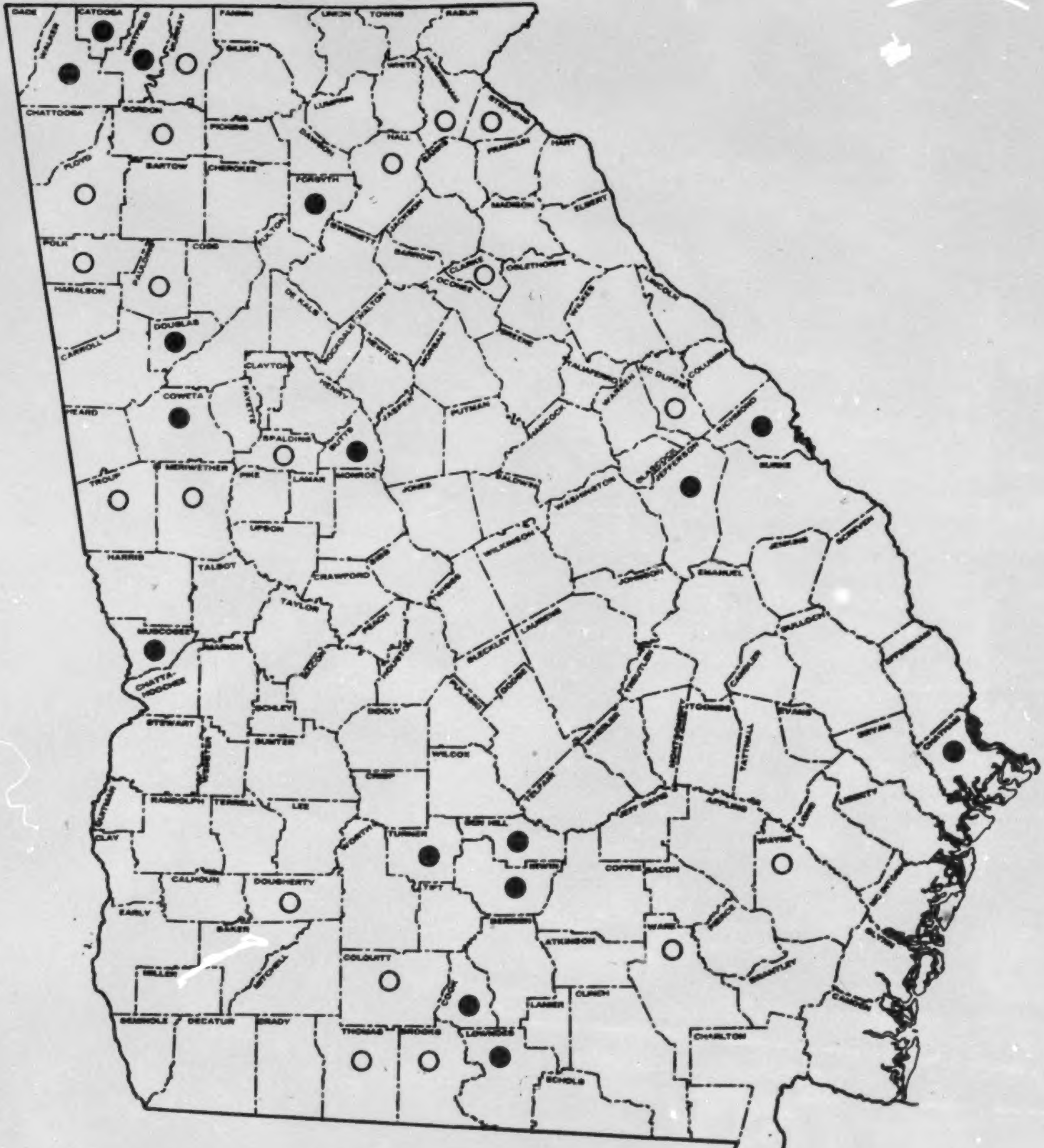
Divide the class into five county commissions. Give each group a specific, hypothetical amount of revenue sharing funds ($300,000). Direct each group to examine the table on p. 51 to see how some counties have spent their funds. They should also look at the graph on p. 52 showing Clarke County expenditures for 1975. Now, taking their own county as the recipient of these funds, have each group decide how the revenue sharing funds will be divided. Each group could present its breakdown of funds in the pie-graph form. Supporting arguments for their choices should also be prepared.

3. Initiate a summary discussion of county finances by considering the cartoon and the graph on pp. 54-55. Taken together these reveal the problem suggested by the county commissioner and the tax commissioner interviewed in Chapter 2. Property taxes have greatly increased over the past decade--to the breaking point according to some observers. Yet, according to the cartoonist, other sources of taxes remain virtually untapped.

4. Let students consider the optional sales tax as an alternative to dependence on property taxes. Give each student a copy of the map on page 21 (using map in MANUAL as a copy-master). From this map they can determine receptivity to this tax. Why would the people of some counties reject it? Bring up some of the ideas that students offered at the beginning of the previous lesson. Do they still feel the way they did about ad valorem taxes? The issue is open-ended and students should be willing to make their conclusions tentative.

LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX SCOREBOARD

● PASSED* ○ FAILED**



*Also passed in the cities of Cave Springs and West Point.

**Also failed in the cities of Eatonton, Rome and Toccoa.

Source: URBAN GEORGIA (May 1976)

CHAPTER 4 THE COURTS

LESSON TEN--THE SUPERIOR COURT (ONE DAY)

OBJECTIVES The student should be able to

1. Make a general statement about the difference between criminal cases and civil cases.

2. Distinguish between the duties of a grand jury and a trial (petit) jury.

3. Describe the process for selecting jurors.

4. Summarize the rules of conduct that jurors must follow.

5. List the responsibilities of a superior court judge.

6. List the duties of a district attorney.

7. Generalize from the tables on pp. 58 and 59 about the incidence of crimes in Georgia.

8. Give examples of several crimes which are felonies and several crimes which are misdemeanors.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Reading: pp. 57-64 in text.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Orient students to the superior court system by turning to the map on p. 61 and the chart on p. 60. Students should see that circuits vary greatly in size and number of judges because of population differences. For example, the Atlanta Circuit covers only one county, but has eleven judges to handle the huge caseload of an urban area. Conversely, the South Georgia Circuit covers five large counties with only one judge. (It should be noted that by acts passed by the 1976 General Assembly, the Oconee and Western Judicial Circuits each now have two superior court judges.)

Have a committee of students prepare an information sheet, as suggested in question 1 on p. 70, on the superior court in your county. In addition to the name(s) of judge(s), the sheet should contain the names of the district attorney and clerk of the superior court.

2. Being able to make distinctions between civil and criminal cases is not always easy. Some cases may have both criminal and civil aspects. Have the class read the examples given in question 5, p. 70. Make sure they can support their conclusions.

   a. Criminal case--the defendant is charged with violating a specific traffic law.

   b. Civil case--the defendant is being brought to court by another private citizen for the redress of a harm done to that person.

   c. Civil case--the plaintiff is seeking redress for a non-criminal wrong done by another private citizen (or corporation).

   d. Criminal case--the defendant is charged with violating a specific law against arson.

3. Being able to distinguish between felonies and misdemeanors is sometimes difficult because the penalty often determines whether a criminal act is a felony or misdemeanor. Have students review the examples given in question 6, p. 70.

   a. this is a felony
   b. this is a misdemeanor
   c. this is a misdemeanor

It is important that students realize that when a criminal act is considered a felony rather than a misdemeanor, the penalties are far greater.

4. Have students examine the tables on pp. 58 and 59. What kinds of crimes are most common? What might account for the differences in types of crimes committed by age groups?

LESSON ELEVEN--LOCAL ACTIVITY OF THE SUPERIOR COURT (OPTIONAL)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Tell what a legal notice is and why it is published in the newspaper.

2. Describe the kinds of non-criminal proceedings that the superior court regularly handles.

3. Summarize the recent criminal case activity of the superior court in his/her county.

COURTS IN ADDITION TO SUPERIOR COURT

STATE (62)

Appling, Bibb, Bryan, Bulloch, Burke, Candler, Carroll, Chatham, Cherokee, Clarke, Clayton, Clinch, Cobb, Coffee, Colquitt, Coweta, Decatur, DeKalb, Dougherty, Early, Effingham, Elbert, Emanuel, Evans, Forsyth, Glynn, Grady, Gwinnett, Habersham, Hall, Houston, Jackson, Jefferson, Jenkins, Johnson, Laurens, Liberty, Long, Lowndes, Macon, Miller, Mitchell, Muscogee, Pierce, Polk, Putnam, Richmond, Screven, Spalding, Stephens, Sumter, Tattnall, Thomas, Tift, Toombs, Treutlen, Troup, Walker, Ware, Washington, Wayne, Worth.

SMALL CLAIMS (58)

Appling, Bacon, Baldwin, Berrien, Brooks, Burke, Butts, Camden, Coffee, Colquitt, Columbia, Cook, Coweta, Crawford, Crisp, Decatur, Dooly, Dougherty, Emanuel, Glascock, Grady, Greene, Hancock, Harris, Henry, Jeff Davis, Jefferson, Jenkins, Jones, Lamar, Lanier, Liberty, Lincoln, Lowndes, Macon, McDuffie, Miller, Mitchell, Monroe, Newton, Pike, Putnam, Schley, Seminole, Spalding, Stewart, Taylor, Thomas, Tift, Toombs, Troup, Upson, Walton, Warren, Washington, Wilkes, Wilkinson, Worth.

JUVENILE (31)

Appling, Bartow, Bibb, Butts, Camden, Carroll, Catoosa, Chatham, Chattooga, Clarke, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dade, DeKalb, Dougherty, Emanuel, Floyd, Fulton, Gordon, Gwinnett, Hall, Houston, Lamar, Monroe, Newton, Rockdale, Troup, Walker, Wayne, Whitfield.

COUNTY (2)

Baldwin, Echols.

CIVIL (3)

Bibb, Fulton*, Richmond.

MUNICIPAL (2)

Chatham, Muscogee.

MAGISTRATE (3)

Clarke**, DeKalb**, Glynn.

COUNTY RECORDER (2)

Chatham, DeKalb.

CRIMINAL (1)

Fulton*.

*To be consolidated into the State Court of Fulton County, effective Jan. 2, 1977.
**Has Magistrate Division.

From Ben W. Fortson, Jr. *Georgia Official Directory of State and County Officers, 1975*. Cited in "Court Reform in Georgia," 1976, by Devereux Weeks.

4. Name the courts (if any) which in addition to the superior court are found in his/her county.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Back issues of the local newspaper.

2. Courts in Addition to Superior Courts (page 25 of MANUAL).

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Collect back issues of the local weekly or daily newspapers, which are good sources of information about court proceedings. The disposition of civil and criminal cases, legal notices, grand jury presentments, jury duty lists, and other court-related activities are regularly published. However, in counties where there are only two sessions of the superior court each year, xerox copies of articles in library issues might be utilized.

Have the class break into groups with specific assignments. Legal notices: With what are they concerned? Why are they published? Who would read them? Grand jury presentments: What do they contain? Do they seem to have any effect? Court cases: What types--civil or criminal--predominate? Which type is more newsworthy?

2. As the students look through the newspapers they may discover news items about the other courts in the county. The counties of Georgia are not uniform regarding the number and type of courts they have. Ask students to look for newspaper material indicating the existence of a juvenile court, a state court, a small claims court. If such courts exist, what kinds of cases are heard in them?

The list of courts on page 25 can be used to check the class findings. A few students might be assigned to find out why their county does or does not have a particular court.

LESSON TWELVE--THE JUDICIAL PROCESS (ONE DAY)

OBJECTIVES The student should be able to

1. Outline the stages, from investigation and arrest through sentencing and appeal, of a criminal case coming before the superior court.

2. Describe juvenile case procedures followed in the local county.

3. Describe the provisions for legal assistance for defendants who are indigent.

4. Trace the route of appeal through Georgia courts.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Reading: pp. 64-69 in text.

2. Guest speakers: juvenile court officer, local attorney.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Every county either has a juvenile court or a superior court judge who hears juvenile cases in special court sessions. Contact your county's juvenile court officer and ask him to explain the special procedures used in handling juvenile cases. If he cannot come to school, a taped interview using a carefully prepared list of questions could be used in all classes. Discussion of the juvenile court (or special procedures for juvenile cases in counties without juvenile courts) should bring out the reasoning behind the special handling of young peoples' cases.

2. The provision of free legal counsel for indigents has been the source of much controversy in recent years. Several students with special interests in the law might research the history of this idea, find out about the local program from local lawyers and judges, then present a panel discussion of its pros and cons.

3. The Case Study (pp. 67-69 in the textbook) describes the step-by-step procedure in a criminal case. Information in each of the steps can stimulate questions for a good discussion. Invite an "expert"--a lawyer, a juvenile officer, an assistant district attorney, or a probation officer to class. A question/answer session built around this case study can clarify not only the procedure but also some of the problems inherent in it. Some questions might be:

> Investigation--how much evidence justifies making an arrest?
>
> Arrest--If Eddie was not warned of his constitutional rights, do the police have to let him go?
>
> Booking--Does Eddie have the right to call his lawyer (or his parents) when he is "booked"?
>
> Initial Appearance--Why does the issuance of a warrant make a difference in the time limit set for appearance before a judge?

Preliminary Hearing--On what basis is the amount of bail set?

Indictment--Why are grand jury proceedings not open to the public as trials are?

Arraignment--What advantage might Eddie gain through pleading guilty?

Trial--Should it be possible for a good lawyer to get a defendant off free even when he did commit the crime? Why?

Verdict--Is it fair not to find a defendant guilty just because one of twelve jurors refuses to go along? Why?

Sentencing--What factors--other than the nature of the crime --might a judge take into consideration in sentencing?

Appeal--If Eddie is poor will the state pay for his appeals? On what bases are verdicts appealed?

CHAPTER 5 CHANGING POPULATIONS

LESSON THIRTEEN--PATTERNS OF CHANGE (TWO DAYS)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Use data from tables to describe recent population trends in Georgia.

2. Summarize the geographic pattern of population change.

3. Generalize about the character of areas losing population and of areas gaining population.

4. Suggest reasons why a county's population might decline or increase.

5. Describe some observable effects that population decline has brought.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Reading: pp. 71-78 and Appendix A in textbook.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Have the class refer to question 1 on page 81.

    a. In 1960, only nine counties had a population of 50,000 or more. These accounted for only 43 percent of Georgia's total population.

    By 1970, the number of counties having 50,000 or more people had doubled. These accounted for 57 percent of the population.

    b. By 1970, only 8.9 percent of the population lived in counties of less than 10,000. However, these counties made up 34.6 percent of the state's total land area.

    c. Obviously, the areas of greatest growth have been those in the next-to-largest category. The most populated counties have, as a group, grown more slowly. Counties of under 50,000 people have, as a group, suffered population decline. Comparing the figures of Table 7 with the news stories brings one to the conclusion that Georgia populations have been shifting from rural, small town areas to urban and suburban areas.

Discussion of these changes should raise the question: "Why have people left the rural areas?" In the news stories, several clues are provided: lack of opportunity for young people, closing of mills, changes in agriculture, the lure of prospering cities.

Yet, an examination of the population map on page 72 and Appendix A shows that there are notable exceptions to the general pattern. To account for these exceptions, local circumstances would have to be studied.

Appendix A reveals that the greatest growth has been generally in counties surrounding already established metro areas. Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, and Gwinnett Counties are prime examples. These are suburban or so-called "bedroom community" areas, not central city areas. Industrial parks, shopping centers, tract housing, expressway systems, and other social and economic factors help account for the rapid development of suburban areas. In some cases, older urban areas (e.g., Savannah) may be left behind.

2. Assign one or two students to analyze the relationship of their county to the figures presented in the table on page 73. Have them prepare a report for presentation to the class. The report, and a subsequent class discussion, could focus on several questions:

   a. Is our county's population change-rate similar to that of others in its size category? Or is it an exception?

   b. Is its population comparable to those of surrounding counties?

   c. What factors seem to be influencing population trends in our county?

LESSON FOURTEEN

INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS AFFECT POPULATIONS (OPTIONAL)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Analyze the relationships among data presented in several forms: tables, maps, prose.

2. Make generalizations about the possible effects of highway construction on population change.

3. Describe the kinds of economic development which may follow highway construction.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Appendix A in textbook.

2. Georgia road map showing interstate highways.

3. Telephone books (yellow pages).

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. To analyze possible relationships among data contained in Appendix A and the highway map, divide class into groups. Each group, with its own map, should trace the route of I-75, I-85, I-20, I-95, or I-16. Ask them (1) to label the counties which the highway traverses, and (2) to find the counties' population figures in Appendix A.

Some of the influence of the interstates on population should immediately show up. For example, tracing the route of I-75 from Atlanta to the Florida line reveals the traversed counties forming an almost unbroken corridor of growth, while the counties adjacent to them, but away from I-75, register declines.

2. The changes a highway may bring are often numerous and far-reaching. Transportation-related businesses--such as motels, restaurants, gas stations, and tourist attractions--provide jobs and boost local economies. These businesses in turn stimulate other private enterprises, including hotel and restaurant supply, wholesale food distribution, auto supply, and building trades. Not so obvious are the warehousing, trucking, and manufacturing companies established as a result of the area's new accessibility.

(Of course, a new highway may also cause businesses to close along older roads which are handling less and less traffic.)

In order to determine the possible effect of highway construction on economic activity in your home county, have students investigate the local phone book. From listings in the yellow pages, they can find out the number and kinds of businesses located near the interstate, recent 4-lane roads, or other new highways. A check with the local chamber of commerce can verify any tentative conclusions the class might draw. Did any controversy attend construction of the highway in your county? The local newspaper, road commissioner, or a realtor should be a source of information.

LESSON FIFTEEN

RURAL MIGRATION: THE U.S. AND GEORGIA (OPTIONAL)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Recall several reasons for the decline in rural populations.

2. Tell in his own words what is meant by the concept, "dispersal of population."

3. Describe how Georgia's population trends relate to the national pattern.

4. List the economic and cultural factors which may influence people to move from urban to rural areas.

5. Suggest ways in which rural county governments might encourage population growth.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Copy of article: "Growth Policies to Suit Citizen Preference," Georgia County Government Magazine (8/75) (see page 35 in MANUAL).

2. Various issues of Georgia County Government Magazine, Georgia Official and Statistical Register.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Review the decline of rural population. Emphasize that the plight of rural areas depicted in "The Migration" (pages 74-78 in textbook) is not unique to Georgia. As the nation moved from a basically agrarian society to an industrial one, migration from rural sections to urban centers grew rapidly. The stories related in "The Migration" could have happened earlier in other parts of the country. Today, being bypassed by an interstate highway affects a town just as being bypassed by the railroad did 75 years ago.

2. Pass out copies of the article, "Growth Policies to Suit Citizen Preferences." Note the reversal of the trend depicted in "The Migration." To be sure, there is no mass return to rural areas. Many small towns continue to die on the vine. However, in the past decade industry has dispersed from its former concentration in urban centers to formerly agricultural land. Ironically, it is the improved system of highway transportation that makes this economically feasible.

After students read the article, discuss why some people move to rural or semi-rural areas. What are the advantages and disadvantages of rural living? Of urban living?

3. In order to pin down this change in population movement, more evidence is needed than is provided in the article. Census data can be examined. Summaries of national statistics are available in several forms in most libraries. Georgia figures 1790-1970 are found in the Georgia Official and Statistical Register (usually in each school and local library). This volume gives county-by-county population trends. It shows that some Georgia rural counties are now gaining population after decades of losses.

For in-depth descriptions of what's happening in Georgia, various issues of Georgia County Government Magazine highlight the revitalization of rural counties.

LESSON SIXTEEN

EFFECTS OF A BOOM--THE NEED FOR LAND-USE PLANNING (ONE DAY)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Describe some problems that population growth could bring to a county.

2. Describe the effects population growth has on county government services.

3. Explain why population growth makes county-wide planning important.

4. List the kinds of development and activities that must be included in a comprehensive plan for growth.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Reading: pp. 78-81 in textbook.

2. Copy of article: "Land-Use Policy in DeKalb County," from Georgia County Government Magazine (8/75) (see page 39 in MANUAL).

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. After completing the reading in the textbook on the projected boom in Liberty County, students should be able to list several problem areas--housing, schools, environment, sewage, utilities,

GROWTH POLICIES TO SUIT CITIZEN PREFERENCE

There still prevails in this state, as in much of the country, the notion that cities will keep growing and rural areas continue losing their population. Land-use policies, or lack of them, plus the whole framework of the economy has been based on this premise since the beginning of the industrial revolution.

Georgia needs consciously to turn this thinking around and to establish policies that will address themselves to the reality of a new phenomenon in our society. That reality is the population/economic dispersal, the out-migration of people and their investments from the largest urban centers. We need no longer speculate about its happening; we have statistical proof that since 1970 our nation's eight largest metro areas have suffered a sharp decline in their rate of growth. Some have actually lost population as our own Capital City has done recently.

This new pattern is without precedent since 1790 when the first census was taken.

What are termed non-metro counties (those with no city over 50,000 population) gained 4.2% between 1970 and 1973, while the largest metropolitan areas including their suburbs gained only 2.9%. No "back-to-the-farm-movement," this; people are indulging their desire to live in smaller communities, to be closer to a natural environment and perhaps to regain a sense of community or locality.

Our improved transportation systems have helped make this possible. But what is accelerating this growth in rural America is the increasing availability of jobs outside major metro areas.

Reason tells us that there has to be a limit to the growth of the big cities. There is a point beyond which economy of scale is lost and it becomes wasteful of resources and human effort to further concentrate masses of people on a tiny percentage of the available land. Experience bears this out.

William E. Farrell of the New York Times Service put it this way after talking with urbanologists on two continents: " . . . the costs of providing essential services for older urban areas will become increasingly onerous for wage earners in coming years." He compared it to a situation where a single wage earner was left to support a large mansion from which all the contributing members of the household had moved.

There are many interrelated reasons for the general slow-down in population growth, for the dispersal from large cities and for the willingness of employers to locate in extra-urban settings. Many of them are conditions the industrial society has manufactured for itself. High crime, congestion, poor environment, too restrictive laws made necessary by density, and most bitter of all, the feeling of being lost in the bigness of a megalopolis–of not counting–combine to make most Americans who live in large cities feel that they would be happier in smaller communities.

Our large cities, after all, are the product of industry. Its demands have shaped them just as its productivity has supported them.

But the social satisfactions in a super large city seem to have been gained in spite of industrial development and not because of it. Much of the urban environment has been made tolerable only by man's own adaptability. He has changed his own psyche to accommodate conditions of a concentrated population. And his adaptability, too, has found its limits.

In this new age of migration, let society be architects of its environment and not victims of circumstance that industrial efficiency dictates. Let us knowingly design the desirable balance between what is economically efficient and what supports a high quality of life.

This generation has the technology to shape its future if we will recognize the challenge before unbridled, non-selective growth of certain rural areas re-creates some of the problems large urban centers are encountering today.

Because people have demonstrated a strong desire to disperse themselves over more of the countryside, it is incumbent on their governments to develop policies that will support that dispersal–with services for the citizen and for the industry that will make his move possible. It will be the county that must come forward as the supplier of such services, and for the good of urban and rural Georgia alike, these local governments must be founded on adequate revenue bases.

Dispersal of population and industry has already begun. If it is to be managed for man's benefit, there must be governmental organizations on the local level capable of maintaining balanced development.

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solid waste disposal--which are causing official concern. Discussion should raise the question: "What is land-use planning (and zoning) and why is it needed?" The class should raise additional questions such as "How does it work?" and "Why are some people opposed to planning?"

2. Once thinking about the need for land-use planning has been stimulated, students will need more detailed information on what is involved. The article on DeKalb's land-use policies sets out the dimensions of land-use planning in a large metro county. DeKalb has had its boom and its growth is proceeding at a slower pace. The kinds of problems that unregulated growth can bring are manifest in DeKalb.

While reading the DeKalb article, have students note the problems faced and the plans suggested for alleviating them. Of course, DeKalb (1970 population: 415,387) has more problems of greater magnitude than Liberty (1970 population: 17,569), but comparisons are helpful as the DeKalb model could be adapted to Liberty's needs. Discussion should focus on how Liberty might develop a plan along the lines of this model. Difficulties--political and financial--might also be explored.

3. Several students can be assigned to contact members of the local county planning board to find out if the county has a land use ordinance and when and how it was drawn up.

LESSON SEVENTEEN

A HISTORY OF CHANGE IN OUR COUNTY (OPTIONAL)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Trace the population changes in his/her county from 1790-1970.

2. Describe some political, social, and economic changes related to population changes.

3. Generalize about the relationship of the local county's growth pattern to those of surrounding counties and the state as a whole.

4. Gain information from a variety of community resources.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. County Census Reports 1900-1970.
2. County History (if available).
3. Back issues of local newspapers.
4. Guest speaker.
5. Old photographs.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. This lesson can develop more or less depth depending on the number of resources utilized. The primary source should be the census reports. These can be obtained for both the county and municipalities. Using these figures as a starting point, county histories for given periods--for example, 1890-1900, 1920-1930, 1950-1960--can be examined for clues to the kinds of governmental, economic and social concerns and activities were prevalent at the time. The files of local newspapers often hold a wealth of useful information on business activities, real estate dealings, social behavior, and political developments.

2. Long-time residents of the county may be available as guest speakers or for interviews for a student-authored narrative on county growth. Old photographs, copies of deeds, copies of newspaper items, and legal notices are often obtainable to help complete the picture.

3. Final discussion should center around the effects of population change on county development and possible reasons for changes in census figures.

LAND-USE POLICY
IN DEKALB COUNTY

By Helen Bussey
ACCG Research Associate

DeKalb County, one of the highest growth counties in Georgia, passed a land-use planning program in the summer of 1973. The decision to initiate such a program resulted from several problems manifesting themselves in recent years.

Transportation was one of those problems. Many of the busy thoroughfares traversed residential areas causing safety hazards and preventing their full utilization as major thoroughfares. Also DeKalb officials hoped to bring jobs closer to the people through MARTA's transportation option. Planning and zoning would play a key part in the development of MARTA routes through DeKalb.

Another problem for DeKalb was the scarcity of open land environmentally suitable for development. One example of this is Soap Stone Ridge where, though zoned for industrial use, the land has an unusual geological composition that will not support construction. The Yellow River Basin has the limitation of being so rocky that the installation of water and sewer systems is almost impossible.

Environmental conditions such as these impose themselves on the zoning decision. Are they suitable for any sort of development or must they be zoned open space only?

DeKalb officials agreed to a total countywide program rather than one of limited control, not only because the limited system has proven to be legally shaky, but because leaders and planners felt the regulation and guidance of high quality growth throughout the county was to the citizen's best advantage.

Their first step was to establish a set of objectives: DeKalb County would seek to create and preserve a visually satisfying and stimulating environment for all residents; maintain a planned and orderly growth rate compatible with the provision of needed public services at lowest costs, ultimately achieving stable population densities for a quality environment; coordinate its growth with that of the metropolitan region of which it is an integral part; achieve a well-balanced and diversified economy which assures economic and employment opportunities for residents; assure equal opportunities for residents in education, recreation, housing, employment and health care; and protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment in an urban setting.

Next, DeKalb County listed under categories such as Housing, Commerce Industry and Office, Public Services and Facilities, Open Space and Recreation Lands, Environment, and Transportation, specific goals upon which their land-use plan is based.

They feel that in order to improve housing conditions, it is necessary to (1) encourage continued residential development within the framework of residential communities and neighborhoods; (2) implement a program which insures the coordination of public and private resources to provide housing for all income levels close to employment opportunities and suited to varied life styles; (3) improve deteriorating residential neighborhoods through programs of conservation, rehabilitation and rebuilding; (4) protect the quality and amenities of residential neighborhoods from conflicting land-use encroachment; (5) discourage residential development in proximity to natural and man-made hazards; (6) encourage innovations in housing construction and planned residential development techniques.

Concerning commerce, DeKalb hopes to (1) encourage the concentration of activities around existing shopping centers, resist commercial development in residential areas except on a planned functional basis, and encourage the improvement of the quality of shopping centers; (2) prohibit commercial strips . . . (3) provide for the development of community commercial centers accessible to residential neighborhoods and regional centers convenient to major transportation facilities and (4) encourage the development of multi-use activity centers which may include planned collections of compatible office, retail, entertainment, residential, governmental, educational and cultural uses.

In areas of Public Services and Facilities, the plan is to (1) develop and improve public services and facilities on a basis of need . . . (2) locate, operate and maintain public facilities with maximum accessibility and minimal adverse effect on the environment and (3) encourage the integration of services and facilities among the various agencies to prevent duplication and improve economy of operation.

The county also wants to designate and acquire adequate recreational sites . . . (2) promote compatible development in areas adjacent to public open space and recreational sites; (3) utilize suitable natural flood hazard areas for open space or recreation use and (4) support the development of regional parks with specialized recreation facilities which are available to all residents.

Environmentally, goals to be achieved include the (1) improvement and preservation of the quality of the physical environment through the maintenance of air and water quality standards, abatement of noise pollution and conservation of natural resources; (2) preservation and protection of scenic vistas, significant natural features, nature areas and historic sites; (3) protection and stabilization of soils to prevent erosion and water pollution; (4) designation of land uses compatible with physiographic features of the land and (5) encouragement of creative uses of urban design to provide for pleasing development and visual order within the county.

The final area, Transportation, includes in its objectives, the development of a functionally balanced and regionally coordinated transportation system . . . planning for unified development around rapid transit stations to insure compatibility; promotion of public transportation services which adequately serve all citizens and allow access to major activity centers and facilitate the movement of people and goods without disrupting residential communities, and with minimal adverse effect on the environment.

After defining objectives, a policy for achieving them was outlined. This policy was worked into a Framework Plan, updating transportation, designating major public facilities and identifying areas suited for employment and activity centers.

Potential

In order to identify these areas an analysis of the economic base and an in-depth industrial/office site study was required. Based on future housing demand, land for potential residential development is identified and a county-wide land use mix is determined. . . .

The Planning Commission has recently published a list of recommendations pertaining to growth rate, population distribution and development densities, transportation, land use and environment, public services and facilities, housing, community preservation and improvement.

The major recommendations for controlling the growth rate is to establish a maximum population limit for the year 2000 that will not impose demands beyond the capability of the natural environment. . . .

The second recommendation is to aggressively seek regional economic growth as a means of diversifying employment, increasing in-county employment, reducing transportation demands and strengthening the tax base. Such economic growth should not detract from the quality of the man-made and natural environment. The county should actively recruit new industry, especially that which has low water demand and a relatively low yield of water and air pollutants. . . .

The long range solution to transportation problems in DeKalb is to reduce the need for transportation, say the planners. This should be achieved in two ways: first, by a sensitive spatial allocation of land uses so travelers may reduce the number and length of trips necessary to carry out their activities, and secondly, by improving communications to reduce the need of physical trips. . . .

The county encourages the development of activity centers which offer planned collections of retail, health, office, entertainment-recreational, governmental, residential, educational, and cultural facilities. This results in convenience for residents, and a reduction in travel time and costs. It also provides a focus for civic life. . . .

DeKalb County's goal in the area of housing is to achieve a balanced mix of housing types, sizes, and prices to meet the diverse needs of its residents. Thus the county needs to balance residential cost deficits by providing for new industrial and commercial development rather than by excluding low priced housing.

Finally, the county can reverse the blighting trends now evident in some established communities. High priority should be given to developing policies that encourage maintenance and improvement of existing housing. To accomplish this, planners suggest that the county (1) discourage demolition of sound and restorable housing to make way for public works projects, expanded commercial zones or more costly housing; (2) encourage use of innovative site planning, landscaping and buffering devices to protect existing housing from the effects of non-residential development; (3) encourage public and private efforts to rehabilitate older housing units. . . .

Throughout the whole process of planning, the one essential element is citizen participation. DeKalb officials realize this and involve their citizens in as many ways as possible.

Citizen input to public meetings of the planning commission is encouraged, and perhaps for that reason, DeKalb has some of the most well-attended meetings of any local government in Georgia.

Officials also make use of civic groups and all manner of community organizations where their help is appropriate to the job at hand.

From time to time the county officials will hold district meetings or survey civic associations to help delineate sub-areas. Neighborhood considerations in comprehensive planning help preserve a sense of community which has long been one of DeKalb County's strengths.

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CHAPTER 6 CURRENT ISSUES

LESSON EIGHTEEN--CONSOLIDATION AND/OR MERGER (TWO DAYS)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. State the rationale for and against the merger of counties.

2. Describe how population growth patterns might a) make city/county consolidation desirable or b) increase the importance of county government.

3. Give several reasons for some county residents' opposition to consolidation of city and county government.

4. Cite examples of ways in which counties are cooperating to provide services.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Reading: pp. 83-89 in textbook.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. In beginning a discussion of county consolidation, students might be reminded of their earlier discussion of ad valorem taxes. Then it was pointed out that some counties have tax bases many times larger than those of others. Yet, all counties are expected to provide essential services and there are certain basic costs.

To illustrate the primary argument of those who want to combine counties, obtain the costs of buying and maintaining items whose expense could be shared by cooperating or merged county governments, e.g., fire trucks, road scrapers, police two-way radio communication systems, a high school football stadium, or a computerized tax-billing system.

Population growth may be another argument for county merger or city-county consolidation. Discussion of the population factor should reveal that county lines exist regardless of population concentrations. Therefore they may serve as obstacles to planned development. For example, residential and commercial development along a boundary-line would require setting up water, sewer, and gas lines; allocating police and fire protection; and maintaining equitable zoning and building codes. The necessary cooperative county effort may be difficult to obtain.

Frequently, a new development may require services not formerly provided by one or another of the counties involved. Or one county may not have a tax structure adequate to the demands for new, costly services.

2. On the other hand, growth per se may make the existing county a more important government unit than it was. The county may be especially needed to keep tabs on development by several private enterprises and to closely regulate zoning in order to avoid future problems. Many of the problems associated with residential growth--such as solid waste disposal, utilities, road maintenance --are perhaps best met by smaller governmental units in close touch with the situation and therefore most responsive to local needs as expressed by citizens. (This is claimed, for example, by the city of Decatur located in DeKalb County.)

Anti-merger spokesmen have tradition on their side. People are generally loath to give up time-honored patterns of thought and action. The county, county seat, county high school, and county courthouse provide institutions with which some people readily identify.

To eliminate local institutions through consolidation into large governmental units would perhaps eliminate for some people their only personal contact with government. Discussion should bring out speculation about the likely outcomes of clashes between these human factors and economic arguments for consolidation.

Another factor influencing opposition to consolidation is the citizen's perception of his own self-interest. Have students read the article on p. 87 describing the Savannah/Chatham County merger failure. This case, plus the cartoon on page 93, clearly shows one school of thinking. County residents may prefer to enjoy whatever benefits a city might provide without assuming the burden of increased taxation. Discussion of this issue could focus on the "morality" of using services without paying for them.

3. Consolidation of your county? Using questions 3 through 6 on page 103 as starting points, have students investigate the potential for merger of their home county with surrounding ones. Are there any good reasons for doing so? If your county is relatively wealthy compared to its neighbors, merger will be perceived differently than if it is relatively poor. Consider possible effects on regional facilities (such as hospitals and libraries), extension of services, and administrative organization.

LESSON NINETEEN

THE QUESTION OF DOUBLE TAXATION (OPTIONAL)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Describe the position of city dwellers who object to paying county taxes in addition to their city taxes.

2. Describe the arguments for taxing city dwellers for both county and city services.

3. Delineate which services and functions of the city and county are duplications and which are not.

4. Analyze the court's resolution of one case on the issue of double taxation.

5. Understand mergers of functions and other alternatives for resolving the issue of double taxation.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Article: "High Court Refutes 'Double Taxation' Claim" (p. 45 of MANUAL) to be dittoed and handed to each student.

2. Examples of local property taxes paid by city residents and by county residents in unincorporated areas.

3. Optional reference: Handbook for Georgia Mayors and Councilmen (see "Sources of Information").

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Ask students if any citizens in the county are subject to double taxation. After a short discussion provide students with an example of real property taxes paid to the county by a resident of the county compared to the real property taxes paid by a resident of a city which are in addition to his county property tax.

> e.g., Mr. Peach owns land in Blossom City, the county seat of Orchard County. Last year his property taxes to the county were $110. In addition he paid property taxes of $170 to Blossom City.

Is this fair or unfair?

In discussing the example, have students consider what services Mr. Peach received from the county.

(The textbook (pp. 1-6) reviews county services. These, of course, include recordskeeping, courts, road maintenance, elections services, etc.

Have students also review what services he received from the city.

(Examples: garbage collection, fire protection, police protection, street and street lighting maintenance, road maintenance, zoning protection, etc. The Handbook for Georgia Mayors and Councilmen can provide further information on city services.)

2. As students name them, list the services on the board. Note those which overlap or are duplications. Consider how they might be merged. Possible alternatives are:

a. Total Consolidation. The most comprehensive approach to the solution of these problems would involve the merger of the existing city and county departments into one system of departments to perform the functions now performed by both governments. This alternative would require a single legislative body representative of the county population. A single administrative office would direct government business, and the currently duplicated departments would be combined to utilize existing resources in personnel and equipment.

b. Merger of Functions and Services. Another approach to eliminating duplication in the operation of counties and cities is to merge functions. Such services as law enforcement, fire protection, and street and road maintenance become the responsibility of either the city or county under a merger arrangement. The government responsible for a specific service performs it for the entire community under a contract arrangement whereby the costs are shared.

Consider each alternative remembering that approval of both governments would be necessary.

3. Have the students read the article, "High Court Refutes Double Taxation Claim," and analyze both the decision of the court and the reasoning of both parties. Raise these questions:

Was the ruling nearly a foregone conclusion?

If the court had ruled otherwise, what effect would that have on local governments in Georgia?

Why should city dwellers have to support services that primarily benefit county residents?

HIGH COURT REFUTES "DOUBLE TAXATION" CLAIM

A case that originated in DeKalb County is important to all county government in Georgia. It settles the matter of "double taxation" claims with which some citizens have been contesting payment of county general levies. The Superior Court ruled first that city residents could not be exempt from paying county taxes even though the city was furnishing them, for an additional tax, some of the services the county tax would have covered.

The Georgia Supreme Court has been reviewing briefs of a case entered by the Decatur Taxpayers' League against the DeKalb County tax commissioner, Eugene Adams. City taxpayers, in this instance, are challenging the county's right to collect from them the same general tax levy that citizens living outside incorporated areas pay.

DeKalb County provides waste collection, fire and police protection, ambulance service and a multitude of municipal type services to residents of unincorporated areas. Those living within the city argued that they should not pay as much tax to the county because their city provides some of these services.

The Court requested supplementary briefs addressing the question: "Where the levy is general, what authority is there for or against the proposition that a (city) resident has an equal protection or due process ground for complaint . . . because he is not provided some of the county services financed by the levy?"

When all the arguments were over, the Georgia Supreme Court unanimously ruled that residence within a city did not exempt a citizen from paying the general county levy.

The core of the question, the Court said, was that the law requires that a county government *levy* taxes equally, but there is no requirement for equal delivery of services paid for by those taxes.

Part of the decision hinged on a very technical interpretation of Code Ann. 2-7801a (Georgia Laws 1972, page 1552) which stated in part that "no city or county may exercise any such powers or provide any such service . . . inside the boundaries of any other local governments except by contract . . . " The Court rules this a permissive provision and not one that would set aside explicit constitutional law regarding collection of taxes countywide.

Assessment of property must be equal. The levy of tax must be equal for property of equal value. But a local government cannot be required, the Court said, to provide equal services to all citizens. The fact that one person receives welfare aid does not mean that every other citizen, regardless of need, should receive an equal amount.

This most recent decision is confirmation of another concept that seems to be unclear to many people. That is, that a citizen of a municipality does not secede from the county.

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LESSON TWENTY--PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP (OPTIONAL)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Give several reasons for a county's appointing professionals --such as a county manager or a police chief--rather than depending on elected officials.

2. Give several arguments for retaining elected officials in administrative positions in county government.

3. Describe the differences between a political office and a non-political office.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Reading: pp. 89-92 in textbook.

2. Article: "The County Administrator Proves His Worth," from Georgia County Government Magazine (p. 49 of MANUAL).

3. Case Study: "The Sheriff or The Chief?" (p. 50 of MANUAL).

4. Reading: pp. 30-33 in textbook (on duties of sheriff).

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. As counties have grown in population and as county governments have been increasingly forced to render additional services, the resources of part-time elected officials have been seriously strained. The almost continual demands upon their time and the greater scope of their responsibilities have raised questions about their ability to handle the job. In many Georgia counties, the question of employing full-time professionally-trained administrators has been loudly debated. The two positions that have received the most attention are the county manager and the police chief.

Have the class review the short reading in the textbook, and read "The County Administrator Proves His Worth." (Use copy on p. 49 as copymaster.) In reading the article, have students consider

- a. What advantages would such a manager bring?
- b. At what point in its growth would a county need such a manager?
- c. How much would it cost to have a manager?
- d. What opposition might there be to having this appointed official rather than an elected county chairman?

Has your county been involved in the questions? If so, have some students check with the local newspaper or a local leader to find out what happened, or is now happening, as a result of efforts to bring in a manager.

2. Case Study: "The Sheriff or the Chief" focuses on an issue that has created much controversy in several Georgia counties. In some cases sheriffs have gone to court to prevent county commissioners from cutting their budgets and replacing them, in their law enforcement duties, with appointed police chiefs. One or two students could be assigned to research the topic for a class discussion of the case study.

Discussion should bring out that while a police chief is a nonpolitical law enforcement administrator, a sheriff is a political official who has constitutionally-prescribed duties as an officer of the court and keeper of the county jail in addition to any law enforcement duties assigned to him. While a police chief is supposedly removed from partisan politics, a sheriff is very much a part of them both in his running for office and in the policies he sets for his department.

Qualifications for the job should also be considered. An appointee to office may be required to have a prescribed educational and experiential background. An elected officer cannot be so required.

LESSON TWENTY-ONE--THE PROBLEM OF CONTROL (OPTIONAL)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. State in his own words the principle of home rule.

2. List several arguments for greater discretionary power for county officials.

3. Describe county level opposition to the state's mandating of much of the county's expenses.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Reading: pp. 92-94 in textbook.

2. Article: "Too Much of the County Budget Mandated by Other Levels" in Georgia County Government Magazine (p. 53 in MANUAL).

THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR PROVES HIS WORTH

The structure of Georgia county governments is marvelously diverse in that we have some counties with sole commissioners, some with probate judges as their chief executives and others with boards of commissioners ranging from three to ten members. The structure of local government is ever evolving as the needs and complexity of service delivery change. This is one of county government's greatest strengths.

Yet in all the evolution of county organization, the one structural change that has proved most efficient and has contributed all by itself to effective management of public affairs has been the designation of the county manager or administrator.

As yet these versatile individuals have a place in fewer than 30 Georgia counties, but to the credit of these organizational pioneers, they have created a trend that is growing stronger each year.

We call him administrator in some counties, manager in others, or executive assistant. His duties are as broad as the commission that appoints him wants them to be, though policy decisions are left by constitutional mandate to the elected county commissioners and may not be delegated in any general way to an appointed official such as the county administrator.

He may be office manager, personnel manager, purchasing officer, ombudsman, comptroller and treasurer or his duties may be concentrated on managing specific service projects and gleaning all federal and state aid possible for them.

In every way he is "lieutenant to the county commissioner," carrying out the day-to-day business of government in lieu of the executive who has dictated how his government shall operate.

The merits of county administrators are most evident in governments where the commission chairman does not serve full-time. Too, the administrator post is quickly evident in the larger counties where the sheer volume of county business demands more than one executive level person.

Quickly scanning the counties that have appointed administrators, it appears that the post is most prevalent in the large counties: Fulton, Chatham, Clarke, Clayton, Cobb, Glynn, Columbus-Muscogee, Richmond, DeKalb, Dougherty, Floyd, Gwinnett, Lowndes, Hall.

But see too that the medium-size counties, and a few of the small ones have discovered the advantages of appointed daily managers for the commissioners' office: Burke, Catoosa, Colquitt, Polk, Stephens, Troup, Wayne and Thomas counties have administrators, too. Cook and Douglas counties are considering creating a county administrator post.

In as many more counties, there are *de facto* administrators—usually the county clerk—who have all the duties of any bona fide county administrator and simply lack the title and clear cut written authority. Typically the county clerks have been the recruitment resource for county administrators, and in most counties the clerk has the practical experience for administrator though some may lack the professional level management training some young people are bringing to the field as colleges recognize through their curricula the need for this well-rounded management capability.

A county board of commissioners that wants to sharpen its office management and perhaps mold a system of coordinating all its departments, could well look to the county administrator position. The person in the administrator's chair can certainly take a load of detail off the commission chairman, and in a changing administration, can lend continuity to governmental functions that often suffer while the "new crew" learns its job.

In practice, the county administrator is a non-political appointment in almost every Georgia county that uses the system. He doesn't replace an elected official, but he can surely augment a commissioner's efficiency by being available to the public as well as to the county employees who need direction to do their jobs. No elected official can be two places at the same time, and with the ever-growing list of councils, authorities and committees that require his attendance, even the most dedicated county commissioner is going to have to choose between some of his obligations. He can't cover them all and still be accessible to the citizen who wants a culvert installed or a pothole fixed.

A good county commissioner, like any good executive, does not try to do everything himself. He recruits reliable people to carry out policies and procedures he devises. The county administrator can be the keystone in such a structure.

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June 1975

CASE STUDY: THE SHERIFF OR THE CHIEF?

The Issue

Shelby County's sheriff has a strong political base. He has been in office for twelve years and is a careful politician. Part of his political strength comes from his reluctance to enforce certain laws. He has, for instance, consistently failed to crack down on restaurants and clubs illegally selling alcoholic beverages outside the city limits. The city police department has been strictly enforcing these laws on all such businesses operating within the city. Enforcement in areas outside the city is the responsibility of the sheriff's office exclusively. The sheriff's lack of action has resulted in mixed feelings among county residents, but city businessmen are upset.

In addition, the main city in Shelby County has continued to respond to its growing needs for law enforcement training and equipment, so that it now has a well-trained and equiped force. Building a professional police force has cost city taxpayers money. They resent paying county taxes to support the sheriff's budget requests for men and equipment, which not only duplicate city resources but lack the professional standards of the city force.

City residents generally feel that it would be cheaper and more efficient for the city force to provide law enforcement for the whole county on a contract basis. These people feel the appropriations for the sheriff's office should be cut back to prevent further duplication of services and equipment. They argue that the sheriff should perform his many duties as an officer of the superior court and leave law enforcement to the more professional city force.

Some county residents have suggested that the county set up its own police force headed by a professionally-trained chief.

Many county residents, however, want the sheriff to retain his law enforcement powers and favor approval of his requests for additional funds to expand his force. These residents oppose the idea of the county contracting with the city for law enforcement services outside the city limits. They feel that their needs are different from those of city residents. In addition, they prefer the easy access to the sheriff which his political position assures. They don't want their law enforcement officers directed by an impersonal, appointed professional.

Discussion

As a leader in the city or county, how would you want to see these problems resolved? Which alternatives would you endorse and how do you justify your choices? Are there other possibilities for handling these problems?

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Counties are creatures of the state, set up to serve as "local agents" of state government.

Yet, since many counties have acted as if they were sovereign political entities--especially in times when state government provided little direction or support for local services, local officials have come to regard their governments as possessing some degree of autonomy.

Initiate discussion of the issue by directing the class to consider the two points of view. Raise the question, "How much control should the county have over its own affairs?" Of course, this question can be answered only after the class has considered some valid reasons for: a) leaving some decisions to county officials, and b) requiring, at the state level, specific county procedures and services.

Reasoning in favor of county discretion usually involves the idea that local needs can be best ascertained and met by officials in regular contact with the local situation. They have their finger on the county pulse and therefore know what will work and what will not. "Officials in Atlanta are too far removed from--and not genuinely involved with--local problems to understand what's going on." Having to get clearance from the state before embarking on any major effort means that great delays often prevent quick action on local problems.

On the other hand, it is frequently pointed out that the upgrading of county services has come about because certain programs were required by the state. Would county law enforcement have improved if the decision to set training standards were left up to the county? Would sanitary landfills have replaced the old county dump if a higher level of government hadn't required it? Some officials at the state and federal levels would question the ability, if not the integrity, of county officials to do the job.

2. How much "home rule" does your own county enjoy? Have one or two students visit the county commission to find out and report back.

LESSON TWENTY-TWO--VOLUNTEERS AT WORK (TWO DAYS)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Suggest ways in which citizens could work on county problems.

2. List several major problems faced by his own county.

3. Name several local service organizations through which citizens in his county might work.

in addition, the student should be

4. Willing to assume some responsibility for improving the quality of life in his county.

5. Interested in helping to find ways to meet needs of citizens of his community.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Reading: pp. 98-100 in textbook.

2. Local resource people.

3. Community Survey (p. 57 of MANUAL).

4. Local newspapers.

SUGGESTED TEACHING PROCEDURES

1. Orient the class to the idea of citizen action by reviewing the news story of the two Oklahoma women. Stimulate discussion by having students suggest local possibilities for such action. Ask them if they know of specific problems in the area of human conditions or welfare, pollution or misuse of resources, traffic congestion, deterioration of historical buildings, public safety, and childrens' services. Have students keep a list of these for future reference in conducting a community survey.

2. A community survey is a good device for finding out what people think about the quality of life in the county. The sample provided (placed in the Oconee Enterprise by the Oconee County Jaycees) can serve as a model for the class in constructing its own. The class survey form should include those items deemed most important on the list generated in procedure 1.

Have each student take a few forms to administer after school. After a quick computation of the findings, the class might designate three or four needs as the most pressing. Then, several ways of meeting these needs through volunteer citizen action could be explored.

3. A local speaker is a particularly good resource in this case because he or she will usually convey a genuine enthusiasm for volunteer work. This is especially helpful in preventing this topic from becoming merely an academic exercise. Speakers from

TOO MUCH OF THE COUNTY BUDGET IS MANDATED BY OTHER LEVELS

The responsibility of running local government should be left in the hands of local elected officials.

So simple and logical a statement would prompt few overt challenges, yet in dozens of subtle ways, state and federal government contrive quite often to negate it.

The stratagem is merely to exercise control of local affairs by controlling local governments' finances. It's a very effective system.

Federalism (by definition our organization of separate, sovereign units of government at the local, state and federal levels) requires a certain degree of discretionary power to be inherent with each political entity. In practice there may be areas of overlapping authority, even conditions where responsibilities of all three levels of government are mingled—as in education and environmental considerations.

Yet if this nation's organizational premise is to remain valid, each unit of government must retain its integrity. It must not be dissolved into a murky soup of unidentifiable ingredients.

To get down to cases, a county government cannot be a bona fide sovereign political entity if it lacks the discretion of determining where it will spend its own tax revenue.

Today in Georgia three-quarters or more of every tax dollar a county collects must be spent in a manner prescribed by elected or appointed officials of another level of government. The local official has a meager hold on his own tax revenues. Year after year his resources are preempted by mandated expenses imposed by other elected officials and agencies quite remote from his own voters' reach.

The list of state service programs requiring local contributions has multiplied over the years. Imposition of state and federal minimum standards for certain job categories and for public facilities translates into more local expense for which the county commissioner has no choice but to fund. Most obvious this year is the extension of wage-hour regulation to county employees. In the case of public safety employees, a typical county is forced either to pay time-and-a-half wages for part of the tour of duty or hire about 30% more personnel just to maintain the customary level of service.

We have state statutes dictating minimum standards of training in certain jobs; pay must be commensurate with training or there will be no applicants. Desirable as these standards may be, it is unrealistic to expect county government to continue absorbing the increased costs they entail. That is why ACCG has fought so hard to win state financial support for training lawmen, firemen, tax assessors and medics. In these areas, at least, the state has recognized its responsibility to provide free or minimal cost training.

Still every year the General Assembly is presented with salary bills that would require various county officials to be paid at rates set by the state. We argue that the one who pays a salary ought to have final discretion in establishing what the salary will be. It is unreasonable to dictate from Atlanta what a county officer in Rome or Zebulon or Swainsboro should be paid. It is illogical to separate from this decision consideration of the competence and vigor he brings to the job. Only the citizens he serves and the officials of that local government with whom he works can make an intelligent evaluation of his worth to them.

Members of the General Assembly and ranking state officials seem to find no difficulty agreeing in principle with our arguments against mandated costs being imposed on county budgets; but sometimes have trouble remembering the position they endorsed when engaged in lawmaking.

A few forgot again this year that Georgia county governments want no more state mandated costs, no matter how splendid the improvement they promise, unless the state is prepared to pay for what they insist the counties buy.

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the Jaycees, the League of Women Voters and the Volunteer Fire Department are found in most communities.

4. Volunteers may be found in many areas of local government. Students might be encouraged to look through newspapers for articles about volunteer activities. Listed below are examples to stimulate class discussion of possibilities for your own county.

a. day care and nursery school helpers

b. home visitors to elderly or invalid shut-ins

c. counselors and attendants at drug crisis clinics

d. assistants in health department clinics

e. aids to public school teachers

f. tutors for pupils with learning problems

g. economic counselors for low-income residents

h. visiting artists in schools, hospitals, and community centers

i. clean-up squads for county parks and recreational facilities

j. workers in burglary prevention programs marking and registering personal property

k. junior counselors in park recreation programs.

COUNTY COMMUNITY SURVEY

PLEASE RATE THE FOLLOWING AS EXCELLENT GOOD, AVERAGE, BELOW AVERAGE, POOR.

1. CITY OR COUNTY SERVICES
    - Garbage collection ____________
    - Water & sewage service ____________
    - Street/road condition ____________
    - Fire protection ____________
    - Police protection ____________
2. RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR
    - Children (up to 12) ____________
    - Teenagers (13 to 18) ____________
    - Adults ____________
    - Senior citizens ____________
3. OUTDOOR ATHLETIC AREAS
    - Elementary school ____________
    - Intermediate school ____________
    - High school ____________
    - Others ____________
4. MEDICAL SERVICES
    - Doctors ____________
    - Dentists ____________
    - Hospital services ____________
    - Ambulance service ____________
    - Red Cross ____________
5. GENERAL INTEREST
    - Parks & picnic areas ____________
    - Public meeting facilities ____________
    - News coverage by newspapers ____________
    - Radio & television coverage ____________
    - Community planning/development ____________
6. JOB OPPORTUNITIES
    - Under 18 ____________
    - 18 to 39 ____________
    - 40 to 64 ____________
    - 65 and over ____________

ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER, PLEASE LIST THE THREE (3) MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO BE DONE TO MAKE THIS A BETTER COUNTY. PLEASE LIST IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE.

LESSON TWENTY-THREE--THE AIRPORT DECISION (THREE DAYS)

OBJECTIVES At the conclusion of the lesson, the student should be able to

1. Express a viewpoint on a given issue according to the role he/she is playing.

2. Organize into interest groups and plan a strategy for a simulated public hearing.

3. Contribute to decision-making on an issue in county government.

4. Review and evaluate the effectiveness of a simulated county controversy and decision.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

1. Five page introduction for the students (to be made from copy masters on pp. 61-63).

2. Role cards (can be copied and cut and pasted on cards, see pp. 65-75 of MANUAL.)

AIRPORT

INTRODUCTION: EXCERPTS FROM "LETTERS TO THE EDITOR"

"I have two children going to the high school. I don't want any planes zooming in only fifty feet over their heads."

"This county needs an airport if we're ever going to get that resort development on Lake Concord. People who are against it just can't see beyond their noses."

"If people would only do a little checking, they would see that some of our so-called public servants are going to make a bundle on this airport deal."

"Anything that's going to bring jobs to this area is welcome as far as I'm concerned. If people had acted ten years ago like some are now, most of us in this county would still be walking behind a mule."

"Who ever heard of building an airport next to a school and a recreation park? You can't play baseball with planes landing on your head, much less study any lessons."

"There is no holding back progress. People who think that they can do that haven't read the history book. An airport is inevitable so we might as well have it here as in the next county."

"I just moved into a $50,000 home less than a half mile from the high school. The last thing I want is an airport in my backyard."

"Who is going to pay for this scheme? You and me, that's who. The property owner always is the one who gets stuck with the bill."

"I have to go into Atlanta two or three times every week, and there are a lot of other people I know who would certainly use a commuter air service."

"There are plenty of us at the junior college who would like to see the airport built. The talk about dangerous low-flying planes is a scare tactic and has no basis in fact."

"The limosine service to the Atlanta airport is a joke. It only runs once-a-day on weekdays. A scheduled air service would make it easy to make connections to any place in the country."

" . . . and furthermore there are other services that the county might think about, like a hospital and an ambulance service or maybe a water system."

These comments from "letters to the editor" indicate some dimensions of a controversy that has recently cropped up in Concord County. Concord County--and its citizens--are fictitious, but the problem is real.

Each student plays the role of an interested citizen in a controversy surrounding a proposed county airport. Each contributes a special perspective based on his own interests as outlined on a Role Card. It is important that he or she not only plays the role, but also spends some time thinking out the role character. Some research into airport pros and cons should be included if there is time.

This simulation is presented to give students an opportunity to pull together some of the material they have learned in County Government in Georgia. The aim is to have them think through alternatives, weigh evidence, evaluate differing points of view, and make a decision about what they would say at a public hearing.

THE CASE

Concord County is located in north central Georgia, about two-and-one-half hours driving time from Atlanta. Once a quiet farming area, the county has become, over the past ten years, a scene of vigorous residential and commercial development. During this period, its population has grown from 16,000 to 31,000. Many of these people moved to the county for employment with new manufacturing, warehousing, and trucking enterprises. Two shopping plazas have surpassed Vine City, the county seat, and Berryville as the centers of retail activity. Last year a state junior college opened, and there is talk of building a regional hospital.

Recently, several business leaders proposed that the county undertake the construction and operation of an airport. They stated that if Vine City were ever to become a regional business hub, it would have to have air service. Supporters of the proposal include some land developers who hope to build a resort/recreation complex on Lake Concord. They foresee sport enthusiasts flying in for golf tournaments and other events. County residents who regularly have to drive to Atlanta see the airport as a big improvement over their five-hour roundtrip.

The proposed site for the airport is just outside Vine City in the center of the county. It is convenient to Lake Concord, the interstate highway, and existing motel accommodations. Adjoining the flat level site is open farmland, but across the road are some new apartments. One-half mile away is the county high school and the recently built city/county recreation fields. In the immediate area is a small shopping center and some residential development.

Opposition to the airport arose almost as soon as the proposal was made public. Nearby residents fear low-flying planes. Air and noise pollution have been predicted. School officials are concerned that teaching will be interrupted. Some citizens object to being taxed to support an airport they might never use. These opponents have organized to stop the airport effort before it gets off the ground.

Before the county commissioners make a decision on the airport question, they wish to listen to the arguments of various concerned citizens. They have called a public hearing on the issue. Extensive newspaper publicity has insured a big turnout.

DIRECTIONS

AIRPORT is designed for three class periods. It takes place in four stages.

1. STRATEGY PLANNING: The following groups should meet together to consider the problem in more depth and to plan strategies. Strategies should be planned according to assigned roles. This allows student-role-players to discuss their viewpoints with the people who share their views, and permits everyone to become familiar with the issue and to get into character. Planning can also include gathering factual support for positions on the airport.

Pro-airport

Wagner
Saunders
Calhoun
Ives
Strauss
Nielsen
Jablonski

Con-airport

Todd
Kyle
Allen
Vittorio
Smiley
Weber
Mahler
Michaels
Verdi
Caldwell
Hines

Undecided

Alden
Goldmark
Delius
Bartlett
Staley
Mann
Mann

(If additional characters are needed, the teacher can create some, using the models provided on the role cards.)

2. PUBLIC HEARING The county commission should be seated at the front of the room. The chairperson should be Mr. Alden. Following the statements presented by county residents, commissioners may wish to ask questions to clarify the projected effects of the airport on county residents. EVERYONE should be prepared to make a statement and ask or respond to questions.

3. COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING Following the hearing, the commissioners should meet and decide what action to take on the proposed airport. (Everyone else will want to listen to the discussion and the final vote.)

4. REVIEW Allow at least fifteen minutes at the end of the third class period for evaluation and discussion of the simulation. How well were the roles projected at the public hearing? Did the role players ask good questions or make reasonable statements? Were all aspects of the problem aired sufficiently? How closely does this activity approximate the realities of controversies over local airports in many Georgia counties today? What dimensions of a real controversy are missing?

Mr. Wagner - Land Developer, Mayor of Vine City
Age 38, married, five children in elementary and high school

You have been very successful in bringing commercial development to Concord County. Your prestige enabled you to be easily elected Mayor of Vine City two years ago. You are convinced that continued growth in Concord County is dependent upon additional transportation facilities. You have heavily invested in the planned sports/recreation complex and believe that it would "put Concord County on the map." Now you are actively lining up support for the airport proposal.

Sen. Todd - State Legislator
Age 33, married, one son in elementary school

You have lived all your life in Concord County. You are a lawyer in a family law firm. You are known as a leader in environmental causes. Over the years you have been an outspoken opponent of what you felt was poorly planned commercial development around Vine City. You led a successful effort to close down a mill that was polluting Lake Concord. You hope to use your position as a State Senator to block any effort to build an airport in the county.

Mr. Alden - Chairman, Board of County Commissioners
Age 56, married, no children, Chamber of Commerce member

You are now serving in your final year of a term as commission chairman. This is a full-time elected position for which you plan to run again. It is important for you to know the likes and dislikes of the voters. You feel that if the county is to continue to progress, there will have to be more business and industrial development. You are the part-owner of a farm supply company in Berryville. As you and your wife also live in Berryville, you will not be personally affected by the proposed airport.

Mrs. Kyle - County Commissioner
Age 61, widowed, four married daughters and six grandchildren, all living in Concord

You have lived all your life in Concord County. You own a large farm between Vine City and Berryville which is run by one of your sons-in-law. You ran for county commission two years ago because you were concerned about the changes occurring in the county. You have seen the local population explosion and feel that the county does not need any more people or industry. You believe that nothing is gained by turning good farmland into commercial property.

Mr. Goldmark - County Commissioner
Age 34, married, one child, Junior Chamber of Commerce member

You moved to Concord County only five years ago to become manager of a manufacturing plant. You immediately became active in community affairs. You worked hard helping develop the city/county recreation department and continue to work in the recreation program. You favor putting tighter controls on land development in the county. You feel that Alden is a weak commission chairman and have recently announced that you are going to run against him in the upcoming election.

Dr. Delius - County Commissioner
Age 38, unmarried, Concord County Republican Executive Committee member

You have been Concord County's only pediatrician since returning here four years ago. Your father, recently retired after twenty years as tax commissioner, has told you that the airport will be a heavy burden on the county's financial resources. But your friends in the business community are counting on your support for the airport proposal.

Mrs. Allen - County Commissioner
Age 37, married, two children in elementary school

You are an insurance salesperson who has done very well in recent years by concentrating in the area of property insurance. You are concerned about the effects that the airport would have on property values, especially since your company insures the apartment complex across the road from the proposed site.

You own a $45,000 home near the site under consideration.

Mr. Vittorio - Apartment Tenant
Age 35, married, one child in elementary school

You are an accountant for a local business firm and have lived in Concord County for five years. You represent a group of concerned residents from the apartment complex across the road from the proposed site. You and your neighbors are worried about the potential dangers that might exist from low-flying planes. You also feel the airport's construction would bring traffic congestion to the area.

Dr. Nielsen - Physician
Age 38, married, three children in elementary school

You recently opened a practice in Vine City. Your home is just outside the city limits, about three miles from the proposed airport. It would be convenient for you to have the air service because you sometimes have to travel to medical facilities in Atlanta. You plan to go to the hearing and speak in support of the proposal.

Mrs. Saunders - Realtor
Age 52, married, one daughter in junior college

You are a realtor whose financial success is more or less dependent upon the continuing growth of Concord County. You moved here ten years ago from Atlanta, having foreseen the suburban migration as a result of the crowding and congestion around the metro area.

You feel that the airport would have a positive effect on property values. You are a homeowner and feel that other homeowners should be happy to have an important transportation facility so conveniently located.

Mr. Smiley - School Teacher
Age 23, unmarried, Little League Coach

You live in an apartment which faces the proposed site. You are concerned about air pollution and loud noise from the planes landing and taking off. However, you do feel that an airport would be good for the economic growth of Concord County.

You have already written a letter to the newspaper suggesting a site near Berryville as a location for the airport.

Miss Calhoun - Attorney for Land-owners
Age 36, unmarried, holds pilot's license

You live in Atlanta and have been retained by the owners of the proposed airport site. You have studied the legal aspects of the case and have determined that there should be no legal obstacles to building the airport. In addition, as an expert in the field of private flying, you hope to convince people at the hearing that the small airport would be beneficial to the community.

Mr. Jablonski - Service Station Owner
Age 56, married, three married sons and one daughter in college

Your station, at the interstate highway exit near the proposed airport site, is a good source of income. You believe the airport would bring you additional business. However, one of your sons has just built a new home less than a mile from the site. He doesn't want planes flying low over his house.

Mrs. Michaels - Home Owner
Age 62, widowed, no children

You are living in a subdivision located near the proposed site. You have spent the last two months trying to organize other home owners to fight against the airport plan. You are concerned that the airport will bring traffic congestion to the neighborhood as well as create air and noise pollution.

Mr. Verdi - Home Owner
Age 38, married, two sons in high school, Little League Coach

You are a newcomer to Concord County. You recently bought a house on Vineland Road not far from the intersection with the interstate. You fear the airport would lower the value of your property. You have joined with Mrs. Michaels in organizing opposition to the airport.

Dr. Mann - School Superintendent
Age 44, married, one daughter attending junior college, Rotary Club member

You were appointed as superintendent last year after having served as high school principal for five years. You and your wife are part-owners of a motel and restaurant located in Vine City.

You are concerned about planes flying low over the high school and about increased traffic on School Road. Several parents have asked you to speak out against the airport, but so far you have adopted a wait and see attitude.

Mrs. Mann - Motel Manager
Age 43, married, one daughter attending junior college, League of Women Voters' member

You are a civic leader in Vine City. You recently managed a very successful voter registration drive in Concord County. You divide your time managing the motel and engaging in various community service projects. You feel the airport is probably needed, but hope that a site can be found further from the city limits.

Mr. Mahler - Apartment Owner
Age 51, widowed, three children in college, Chamber of Commerce member

You live in and own the apartment complex across the road from the proposed airport site. You object to its location so near to your complex. You believe that your property will be devalued and that your apartments might be less desirable to potential tenants. Last year, you had attempted and failed to purchase some of the property in question. You had hoped to expand your complex across the road.

Mr. Ives - Land Owner
Age 62, married, three married children living in Concord County

You and your business associate, Mr. Strauss, purchased the property in question fourteen years ago when the area was almost all undeveloped. Although people have inquired several times about buying the land for housing developments, you preferred to hold on to the land as its value continued to climb. Recently you were contacted regarding the property's availability for a proposed airport. You and Mr. Strauss have decided to sell if your price can be met.

Mr. Strauss - Land Owner
Age 57, married, two married children, Concord County Board of Education member

You and your family have lived in Berryville for over thirty years. You formerly owned a real estate company and are now semi-retired. You have used your knowledge of real estate to help the county schools obtain the best land for the money whenever property was needed on which to construct new schools. Although you favor selling the property you own jointly with Mr. Ives, you are worried about the harmful effects the airport might have on the new high school whose construction you strongly advocated.

Mrs. Caldwell - Mayor of Berryville
Age 45, married, two daughters in high school

You and your husband operate a hardware store in Berryville. Both of you are strongly opposed to the airport. You know that Berryville residents would have their taxes sharply increased if the county commissioners go ahead with the airport plan. Yet, few Berryville citizens would make a half hour drive to the airport to take the short flight to Atlanta. A few years ago you and your husband fought a losing battle against the closing of Berryville High School and the construction of the new county high school on the other side of Vine City.

Mrs. Staley - Director of the City/County Recreation Department
Age 39, married, two children in high school, Georgia Conservancy member

You have, over the last five years, developed the joint city/county recreation program into a model that has been publicized throughout the state. Although, as a sports enthusiast, you like the idea of a well-developed sports/recreation complex being constructed on Lake Concord, you are concerned about the possible environmental damage that might result. Also, you are annoyed that the businessmen who had asked your advice on the sports complex neglected to inform you that the proposed airport would border on the recreation department's playing fields and swimming pool.

Rev. Bartlett - Minister
Age 41, married, six children, Concord County Board of Education member

You are concerned about the location of the airport adjacent to the site of your church. Several members of your congregation have pointed out that planes would be flying in and out during Sunday services. However, as a school board member, you are aware that the airport might stimulate the county's economy, thus bringing in needed school revenue. One of your daughters attends the high school and is organizing student opposition to the airport.

Miss Weber - Campground Owner
Age 29, unmarried, Concord County Democratic Executive Committee member

You operate a campground on Lake Concord, two miles from the planned recreation/sports complex. You have recently invested heavily to expand your facilities to take advantage of the recreation vehicle traffic on the nearby interstate highway.

You are convinced that it would be a mistake for the county to run an airport. You have studied the proposal and have determined that in order to have an airport capable of handling regular commuter air service, the county would have to spend so much money that taxes would be greatly increased. You have decided to make this a political issue and plan to run in this year's election for a seat on the county commission.

Mr. Hines - Professional Planner
Age 27, married, one son in elementary school, Junior Chamber of Commerce member

You work for the Area Planning and Development Commission (APDC) and have been helping to develop a land-use plan for Concord and five other surrounding counties. You recently moved to the area and have bought a home in Berryville. Your analysis of the situation has led you to conclude that Concord County alone could not support the kind of airport proposed. At the meeting, you plan to point out that federal government standards--including requirements for radar if there is to be regularly scheduled air service--could not be met with the relatively small amount of money being suggested by the airport's proponents. You hope to raise the possibility of Concord joining in a cooperative venture with neighboring counties to construct an airport to serve a wider area.

SHORT ANSWER TEST ITEMS

(Teachers may wish to select from these questions for purposes of review or evaluation)

Multiple-Choice (choose the best answer)

1. Public education is supported at the local level primarily through
   - a. local option sales tax.
   - b. fees from licenses and permits.
   - c. personal income tax.
   - [✓ d.] ad valorem taxes.

2. Taxes on real estate vary widely from county to county because
   - a. per capita income is greater in some counties than in others.
   - [✓ b.] there are great differences in assessed property values and services rendered by the counties.
   - c. some counties are more efficient in assessing property values and in collecting taxes.
   - d. salaries for county officials are much higher in some counties than others.

3. Homestead exemptions are applied to
   - a. property used for agriculture.
   - [✓ b.] real estate which the owner uses as his residence.
   - c. buildings owned by persons over 65 years of age.
   - d. personal property found in the home.

4. The difference between a local law and a county ordinance is that
   - a. county ordinances apply to all counties while local laws affect only one county.
   - [✓ b.] county ordinances are passed by the county commission and local laws are passed by the state legislature.
   - c. local laws pertain to money matters and county ordinances set forth rules and regulations.
   - d. violations of local laws are felonies while violations of county ordinances are misdemeanors.

Ad valorem taxes are levied on
   - [✓ a.] real property, personal property, and intangible property.
   - b. income from sales of real estate.
   - c. sales of goods and services.
   - d. personal income and bank account earnings.

6. Which of the following is not a function of county government?
   - a. setting property tax rates.
   - b. recording property deeds.
   - c. issuing marriage licenses.
   - [✓ d.] building interstate highways.

7. In general, Georgia's poorer counties tend to be characterized by
    [✓ a.] small populations and agriculture-based economies.
    b. large cities and industrial development.
    c. suburban development and light manufacturing.
    d. rapid population growth and urban problems.

8. Responsibility for legislation within the county government lies with the
    [✓ a.] county commissioner(s).
    b. tax commissioner.
    c. clerk of the superior court.
    d. probate judge.

9. Generally, as a county's population grows
    a. fewer functions are performed by county government.
    b. cities take over county government responsibilities.
    [✓ c.] county government must provide additional services.
    d. there is little effect on county government services.

10. An individual's property tax is based on
    a. the fair market value of his property minus homestead exemption.
    [✓ b.] the assessed value of his property and the county tax (millage) rate.
    c. the estimated county budget plus federal revenue sharing funds.
    d. the purchase price of the property and the amount of money the county needs.

11. In comparing felonies and misdemeanors, generally speaking,
    a. felonies are less serious crimes and carry lesser penalties.
    b. misdemeanor cases are non-criminal and felony cases are criminal.
    [✓ c.] felony cases are usually tried before a jury, while misdemeanor cases are usually decided by a judge.
    d. felonies involve force against a victim, while misdemeanors involve money or property.

12. If a defendant is charged by police with violating a specific law, this is
    [✓ a.] a criminal case.
    b. a civil case.
    c. an equity case.
    d. a private case.

13. It is the responsibility of a grand jury to
    a. hear evidence in a trial.
    [✓ b.] indict a person to stand trial.
    c. sentence convicted criminals.
    d. hear appeals after conviction.

14. Each county in Georgia is served by a
    a. state court.
    b. juvenile court.
    [✓ c.] superior court.
    d. justice of the peace court.

15. If a person accused of a crime is too poor to hire a lawyer,
    a. the district attorney will serve as his defense attorney.
    [✓ b.] the superior court can arrange for legal assistance.
    c. the county commissioners must provide a public defender.
    d. the defendant has to act as his own lawyer.

16. The correct sequence of several of the steps in a criminal case proceeding is
    [✓ a.] indictment, trial, verdict, sentencing, appeal.
    b. arraignment, arrest, appeal, trial, booking.
    c. booking, sentencing, hearing, verdict.
    d. arrest, verdict, appeal, sentencing, trial.

17. Each county in Georgia expends revenue for which of the following?
    a. hospitals.
    b. airports.
    [✓ c.] courts.
    d. libraries.

18. In 1974, the wealthiest counties in Georgia were
    [✓ a.] Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb.
    b. Clarke, Clayton, Gwinnett.
    c. Stephens, Rabun, Towns.
    d. Grady, Thomas, Brooks.

19. Some of the factors which contribute to economic wealth of counties are
    [✓ a.] personal income and property values.
    b. amount of land area and taxes.
    c. number of schools and automobiles.
    d. percent of acreage in agriculture and sales taxes.

20. In the period 1960-1970, the counties that had the greatest population increases were
    a. in the least-populated category: under 10,000 people.
    [✓ b.] in the size range 50,000 to 100,000.
    c. all over 100,000 in population.
    d. rural counties under 25,000 people.

21. Which of the following ideas was developed to meet possible problems brought on by rapid population growth?
    a. homestead exemption.
    b. county merger.
    c. revenue sharing.
    [✓ d.] land-use planning.

22. Arguments favoring county mergers usually mention
    [✓ a.] better use of limited tax resources and more equal providing of essential services.
    b. enlarged police, fire, and health departments.
    c. elimination of unnecessary elected county officials.
    d. increased ad valorem taxes to pay for upgrading county services.

23. Some county residents oppose city/county consolidation because
   [✓ a.] they expect an increase in taxes.
   b. they feel city governments are less efficient.
   c. they don't like to give up the benefits of rural living.
   d. they believe it would result in fewer services.

24. The strongest opposition to "double-taxation" comes from
   a. county residents who pay ad valorem taxes.
   [✓ b.] city residents who help pay for county services.
   c. county residents who work in large cities.
   d. city residents who are taxed for property they own in the county.

25. Which of the following statements best describes the effects of interstate highway construction in Georgia counties?
   [✓ a.] the interstate highways have stimulated economic activity in rural areas.
   b. the interstate highways have caused population to shrink in rural areas.
   c. the interstate highways have had little or no effect on rural counties.
   d. the interstate highways have influenced counties to shift from industry to agriculture.

Matching

To which county official should you go in each situation?

f 1. to report for jury duty
d 2. to obtain a marriage license
a 3. to purchase an auto tag
b 4. to report an auto accident
e 5. to request an investigation of a relative's death

a. tax commissioner
b. sheriff
c. county commissioner
d. probate judge
e. county coroner
f. clerk of superior court

Which county official is responsible for each of the duties listed?

a 1. assessing property values
c 2. determining easements on property
f 3. recording legal dispositions of property
e 4. accurately locating property
b 5. enforcing laws to protect property

a. tax commissioner
b. sheriff
c. county commissioner
d. probate judge
e. county surveyor
f. clerk of superior court

GLOSSARY

Note: Only some of the government terms used in the textbook are defined in this glossary. The terms defined here are those only briefly, or not, defined in the book--or those which are used regularly throughout the text. Terms which seem well defined in the book are listed here, with the number of the page in the text on which a definition can be found.

ABATEMENT PROGRAM (p. 4, c. 1)

A program established to stop a public nuisance (such as water pollution or insects) in a particular area.

AD VALOREM (p. 43, c. 2)

A Latin term meaning "according to value." An ad valorem tax is one in which property is taxed in proportion to its value, which is determined by the tax assessor.

APDC (p. 89, c. 1)

Area planning and development commissions (APDCs) assist regional groups of counties and cities in planning for the growth of their areas, and in some instances, provide technical assistance services. There are eighteen area planning and development commissions in Georgia, each including five to thirteen counties.

APPEAL (p. 63, c. 1-2)

APPELLATE JURISDICTION (p. 64, c. 1)

The authority of a court to hear appeals of the decisions of another or "lower cou[illegible]" The Georgia Court of Appeals and Supreme Court are appellate courts.

ARRAIGNMENT (p. 69)

ASSESSED VALUE (p. 44)

The value of property used for taxing purposes. In Georgia, the assessed value is 40 percent of the actual fair market value.

BAIL (p. 68)

Money or credit deposited with a court to get an arrested person temporarily released in return for the promise that he will come back for trial at the proper time.

BONDS (p. 51, c. 2)

BOOM TOWN (p. 78)

A town which has a sudden spurt in its population and economy, often due to industry locating in the town.

BUSINESS LICENSE (p. 49, c. 1; p. 51, c. 2)

BUSINESS OR OCCUPATIONS TAX (p. 49, c. 1)

CENSUS

An official tabulation of the number of people living in a certain area.

CIRCUIT (p. 60, c. 1)

An area of the state served by one or more superior court judges. Georgia is divided into forty-two superior court circuits containing from one to eight counties each.

CIVIL CASE (p. 59, c. 1)

CONSOLIDATION (p. 83, c. 2)

Combining of two governments, such as county and city, into one operating unit. An example of consolidation in Georgia is the city of Columbus and Muscogee County.

COUNTY TAX RATE (MILLAGE) (p. 44)

CRIMINAL CASE (p. 57, c. 2)

DECENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT (p. 92, c. 1)

A government in which most authority is not centralized in one person or body but is spread among the several components.

DEFENDANT (p. 57, c. 2; p. 59, c. 1)

In a criminal case, the person accused of breaking the law. In a civil case, the person that the case is brought against.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY (p. 57, c. 1)

The lawyer who represents the defendant in a court case.

EQUITY CASE (p. 59, c. 2)

A special civil case in which an individual either attempts to prohibit or force a certain action on the part of another individual or group.

EXEMPT PROPERTY (p. 46, c. 2)

Property which may not be taxed, such as public lands, churches, non-profit hospitals, and books in public libraries.

FAIR MARKET VALUE (p. 43, c. 2)

The value of property according to current market rates. This value is determined by the tax assessor and is used as the base for the assessed value.

FELONY (p. 57, c. 2)

A serious crime (such as murder or theft) in which the accused is tried before a jury unless he gives up that right and requests that the judge decide his guilt or innocence.

GENERAL PRESENTMENT (p. 62, c. 2)

The report of a grand jury when it inspects, investigates, or offers advice on governmental operations. The general presentment summarizes the grand jury's findings and suggests improvements.

GRAND JURY (p. 62)

HOME RULE (p. 93)

The authority to organize and manage their own local affairs given by a state to a county or city within it.

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION (p. 46, c. 2)

INDICTMENT (p. 62, c. 1)

The document drawn up by the district attorney when a grand jury finds enough evidence to accuse a person of a crime. The indictment provides the accused person with a full description of the charges against him.

INDIGENT (p. 65, c. 1)

INQUEST (p. 34, c. 1)

A hearing of evidence before a jury (such as a five-man coroner's jury).

INTANGIBLE PROPERTY (p. 46, c. 2)

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT (p. 64)

JUVENILE COURT (p. 64, c. 2)

LOCAL LAW (p. 22, c. 1)

An act passed by the Georgia Legislature to provide for a specific need in a specific county or city.

LOCAL OPTION (p. 49)

The right of a local government to vote for or against an issue concerning them. For example, in Georgia, state laws allow counties or cities to vote on whether or not they wish to add a 1 percent sales tax (for local revenue) in their county (or city) to the 3 percent state sales tax.

MAGISTRATE COURT (p. 64)

Takes the place of justice of the peace courts in some counties. This court has jurisdiction over criminal misdemeanors when a jury trial is not demanded and has civil jurisdiction when the matter in question does not exceed $1,000.

MERGER OF SERVICES (p. 86, c. 2)

The operation of a single service by two or more governmental units. Examples are regional libraries and vocational-technical schools which serve several counties.

MISDEMEANOR (p. 59, c. 1)

A crime less serious than a felony and carrying lesser punishment in the state laws. A common misdemeanor is carrying a pistol without a license. Misdemeanor cases are usually heard and decided by a judge without a jury.

ORDINANCE (p. 17, c. 1)

A law passed by county commissioners (in counties), council and mayor (in cities), or similar bodies, dealing with specific local problems or issues.

ORIGINAL JURISDICTION (p. 64, c. 1)

The authority of a court to hear or try cases first, before any other court. Superior courts and state courts have "original jurisdiction."

PLAINTIFF (p. 59, c. 1)

The individual who brings a civil case (in a court of law) against another individual (defendant).

PLAT (p. 3, c. 2)

A small piece of land, or an official map of a small piece of land showing its size, boundaries, location, and physical characteristics.

POLICY (p. 17, c. 1)

A designated course of action which simplifies and clarifies long-range plans and goals.

POLLING PLACE (p. 23, c. 1)

A place for voting in an election.

POPULATION GROWTH RATE (p. 71, c. 1)

The rate at which the total number of people living in a certain area increases or decreases.

PRELIMINARY HEARING (p. 68)

PROBATE (p. 22, c. 1)

To establish a will as genuine and valid.

PROSECUTOR (p. 57, c. 2)

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (p. 4, c. 2)

Government aid given to the handicapped or disadvantaged. Recipients include the needy, unemployed, aged, or disabled.

PUBLIC DEFENDER (p. 66, c. 1)

PUBLIC UTILITIES (p. 3, c. 2)

Business organizations providing the public with essential services (gas, water, electricity, transportation, etc.) under governmental regulation.

PUBLIC WORKS (p. 2)

Those services, operations, or structures used by the public and usually financed by the government. Examples include water works, sewerage systems, roads, and garbage disposal.

REAL PROPERTY (p. 46, c. 1)

Property that is permanent and immobile, such as land and permanent buildings. Most real property is classified as "real estate."

REFERENDUM (p. 34, c. 2)

A popular vote to determine whether a proposed measure will become effective. The issue voted upon is sometimes submitted by a legislative body and sometimes by the people. Referenda often deal with local issues and are voted upon only in a particular county or city.

REGRESSIVITY (p. 49, c. 2)

In taxes, the tendency for the percentage of an individual's income paid for taxes to increase as that income becomes lower. For example, the sales tax is considered regressive because it takes a larger share of a lower-income individual's money than a higher-income individual's.

RESOLUTION (p. 17)

Directions given by a governing body (county commissioners, mayor and council, etc.) relating to matters of a special or temporary nature. Less formal than an ordinance, a resolution is not a permanent law but a statement of intention or opinion.

REVENUE SHARING (p. 49, c. 2)

SENTENCE (p. 69)

STATE COURT (p. 64)

SUBPOENA (p. 30, c. 1)

An official notice which requires a named individual to appear in court.

SUPERIOR COURT (p. 59)

The general trial court for violations of state law and for civil cases. Superior courts have exclusive jurisdiction in felony cases and civil cases concerned with land titles, equity, and divorce.

TANGIBLE PROPERTY (p. 43, c. 2)

Property that is itself of value and can be perceived, such as land, houses, and vehicles.

TAX ASSESSOR (p. 22, c. 1)

The official who evaluates and sets a value on property for the purpose of taxing it.

TAX BASE (p. 83, c. 2)

The taxable, assessed, value of property in a certain area.

TAX DIGEST (p. 28, c. 1, 44)

An official listing which names the property owners in a county, a legal description of their property and the assessed valuation, and other information required by state law. Once the digest is prepared, the tax commissioner sends it to the county commissioners who use it to determine the tax rate.

TAX RETURN (p. 44)

A form requiring information on the taxpayer and his property and asking for the taxpayer's declaration of the value of his property. It is submitted to the tax receiver (or commissioner).

TRIAL JURY (p. 62, c. 2)

VERDICT (p. 69)

WARRANT (p. 67)

A document issued by a judge permitting law enforcement officers to arrest a person accused of committing a crime, or conduct a search and/or seizure of evidence related to a crime.

ZONING (p. 3, c. 2)

The restriction of the use of designated areas of land in counties or cities. These uses are determined by zoning boards based on the land surface and location of the area and passed into law by local government. Usual classifications are residential, business, industrial.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

________ County Annual Report. Your County Commission, Your Courthouse. (Free.)

Each Georgia county issues an annual report of governmental activities. These publications range from primarily budget reports to extensive summaries of all phases of county operations. Descriptions of services of each county department; charts of revenues and expenditures; tables of data on crime, health, welfare, recreation, roads, sanitation, salaries, and utilities; and other information (depending on the county government size and extent of services) are presented.

The County Yearbook, 1975. National Association of Counties/ International City Management Association, 1735 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. (Published annually.)

This is perhaps the most comprehensive reference work on counties. Articles provide information on forms of government, finance, state legislation affecting counties, provisions for services, law enforcement, recreation, environmental management, and solid waste disposal. It provides directories of officials in all U.S. counties and officers of organizations providing services to county governments. There is also a comprehensive topical bibliography.

The Foundations of Government--Georgia Counties. Association County Commissioners of Georgia, 1124 Carnegie Building, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. ($7.50.)

A bicentennial-project resource book which includes the historical development of each county, a chronological listing of events affecting the development of counties from the eighteeenth century on, and a consideration of county operations today and possible developments in the future. Includes maps.

Georgia County Government Magazine. Association County Commissioners of Georgia, 1124 Carnegie Building, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. (Published monthly, $4.50 per year subscription rate.)

Contains news and articles on Georgia counties, reviewing the actions of county governments, the state legislature, and the federal government as these actions affect the counties. It regularly examines issues and problems requiring official and citizen action. Each issue has in-depth features on individual Georgia counties. Particularly helpful in lessons on current problems. (Local libraries or county commissioners may have back issues featuring your county.)

Georgia Official and Statistical Register. Department of Archive and History, Atlanta, Georgia 30334. (Published biennially.)

Especially helpful in lessons dealing with county history population growth, and the development of government. It lists state officials (1777 to the present), election results, and many miscellaneous statistics. It is found in most public libraries and should be in all high school libraries.

Georgia Official Directory of State and County Officers. Ben W. Fortson, Jr., Secretary of State, Room 214 State Capitol, Atlanta, Georgia 30334. (Free.)

Enables one to immediately find the names and addresses of all elected and many appointed officials in both state and county governments. For activities requiring the locating of specifi county officials, it is almost indispensable.

Georgia Statistical Abstract. College of Business Administration University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602. (Published bien nially, $5.00.)

A reference tool for obtaining county-by-county data on such subjects as population, labor, income, agriculture, manufacturing, sales, transportation, banking, housing, law enforcement, and public welfare. It would be valuable in helping to make comparisons between your county and the rest of the state

Handbook for Georgia County Commissioners. J. Devereux Weeks, Institute of Government, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgi 30602. (Available 1977.)

Provides detailed information on the legal bases of county government, and the conduct of county business, budgeting, planning, public works, police and fire protection, building codes, revenue collection, environmental protection, personnel administration, recreation, and intergovernmental relations. There are also listings of sources of additional information. The book would be very helpful in studying such questions as "What activities may county governments engage in?" and "How can they best carry them out?"

Handbook for Georgia Mayors and Councilmen. J. Devereux Weeks and Joseph H. Boyett (Eds.), Institute of Government, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602. ($5.00.)

Helpful in comparing city and county government in Georgia. Offers information, guidelines, and discussion about municipal officials and council meetings, law-making, finances and budgeting, planning and environmental protection, recordskeeping, and inter-governmental relations. It also covers (and offers guidelines for evaluating) city services including public safety, utilities, recreation, etc.

The State Directory of Public Officials in Georgia. Dixie Publishers, P.O. Box 125, Richmond Hill, Georgia 31324. ($10.30.)

A compilation of information from official sources, including names and addresses of state, county, and municipal officers. For selected municipalities, detailed information is given on manufacturing, employment, utilities, sanitation, property tax structure, municipal services, and health and recreation facilities. It also includes listings of libraries, radio stations, daily and weekly newspapers, chambers of commerce, and APDC's.

Statistical Report, 1975. Georgia Department of Revenue, Trinity-Washington Building, Atlanta, Georgia 30334.

An excellent source of easy-to-read charts, graphs, and tables of Georgia taxes. Material is appropriate for making duplications or transparencies. Useful county data includes tax receipts, property values, motor vehicle registration, and personal income.

Yearbook, Georgia County Government Magazine. Association County Commissioners of Georgia, 1124 Carnegie Building, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. ($10.00.)

Includes information on each county; the names, addresses, and phone numbers of officials; statistics on population, roads, and land area; listings of each county's services; and tables of data on economics and taxes.

The Institute of Government has served as an integral part of the University of Georgia for more than forty years. Its chief objective has been to assist Georgia's public officials to achieve better government for the people of the state. To this end, it draws upon the resources and expertise of the University to offer a broad program of governmental training, research, and technical assistance.

The Institute is organized into five divisions: Governmental Research and Services, Governmental Training, Legislative Research, Police Science, and Corrections. Collectively, the divisions design and conduct over 300 continuing education programs a year in which over 11,000 public officials participate. Technical assistance takes many forms including evaluations of existing facilities or methods, provision of information for decision making, and assistance in establishing new programs.

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